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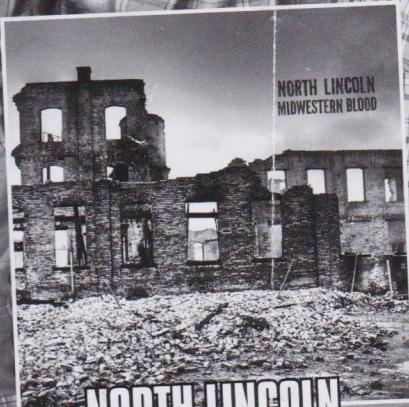
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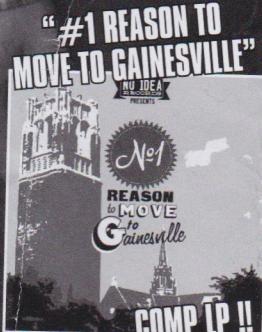


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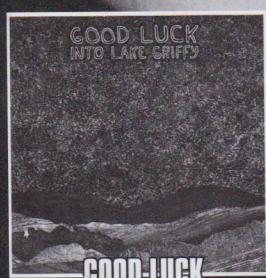
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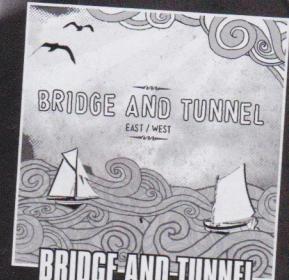


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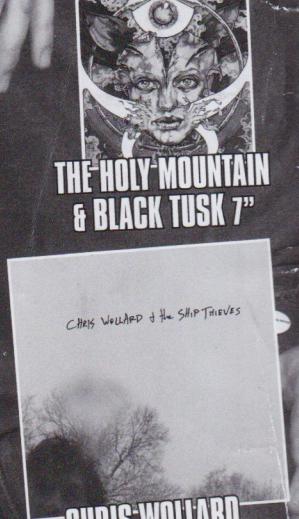
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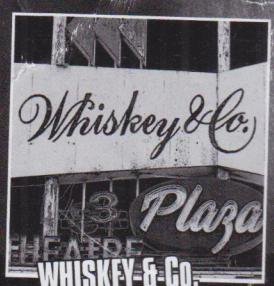
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Razorcake is a bonafide non-profit music magazine dedicated to supporting independent music culture. All donations, subscriptions, and orders directly from us—regardless of amount—have been essential components to our continued survival.

Although *Razorcake* is very organized, we are tiny and exist on a tight, modest budget. Out of a 540 square foot basement, we operate the entire zine production, podcast production, website production, and distribution. One of our founding goals was to open up a community center based in our neighborhood of Highland Park, California. Due to the current economy, our efforts have slowed towards this goal. The money we make has gone into surviving: covering raised postage and printing costs and installing a system where the “*Razorcake* brain” computer is backed up nightly in the hopes we don’t lose what we’ve already made.

If you feel strongly about *Razorcake* and have the opportunity to throw a benefit show in our name—no matter where you are—we promise two things. 1) We’ll send you zines, stickers, and buttons for the benefit. 2) Every single penny you raise in our name will go directly into a fund set aside for the center. The Bar Feeders lead the charge and the money they raised in our name has been safely set aside. We hit a serious hiccup with a benefit thrown in our name in Boston that took the wind out of our sails. The woman who sponsored it took all of the money for herself and then disappeared.

If you would like to hold a benefit in *Razorcake*’s name and won’t rip us off, we’d really like to hear from you.

If you would like to give *Razorcake* some longer-term, hands-on assistance, we’re looking for volunteers in the following areas: non-profit grant writer, non-profit fundraiser, FileMaker Pro wizard, PC network specialist, and website coder (PHP-Nuke and Zen Cart). If you live in the L.A. area, we could always use a helping hand. Our door is open.

Contact us via www.razorcake.org if you’d like to help out.

Thank you.

—Todd Taylor

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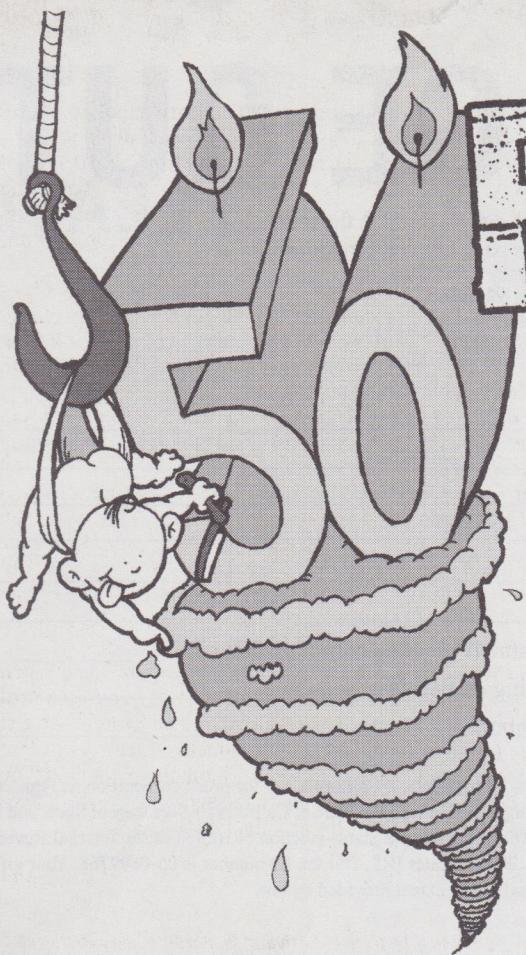
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RAZORCAKE

50TH ISSUE CELEBRATION/BENEFIT!

**THE BANANAS
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A black and white photograph showing two musicians. One is in the foreground, wearing a cap and a patterned shirt, playing an electric guitar. Another person's arm and guitar are visible behind them. In the background, there are palm trees and a brick wall.

RAZORCAKE.ORG
RECORDS, SHRTS, AND MAGAZINES

DEAR LANDLORD

Issue #50! Woo! Fuck yeah!

I'm used to things malfunctioning, breaking, becoming ever more complicated. I'm used to getting kicked in the nuts repeatedly. I'm convinced our fax machine fucking hates me on a personal level if I don't stare at it when it's supposed to be working. I take these perpetual, daily annoyances as partial payment for the life I've chosen. When I was a young kid, my retired, thirty-years-in-the-Navy grandfather gave me two pieces of advice: "Don't join the military. Start your own business," and then he challenged me to eat ice cream without bending my elbows.

When *Flipside* collapsed in late 2000, and it was readily apparent that my managing editor days had come to an unceremonious end, it was friends (two who are pictured below) who convinced me to take the leap and start something new. I felt like throwing up into my own mouth. I stuck to a strict pizza, whiskey, and beer regimen to guide my thoughts.

From the onset of *Razorcake* in early 2001, co-*Razorcake* dude and Gorsky Press honcho Sean Carswell and I wanted to approach the template of a DIY music zine—columns, interviews and articles, reviews—from a fundamentally different angle. Give our columnists free reign over what they want to write about and give them individual space, like regulars at a bar. Don't shy away from bad reviews—(cough) Jimmy Alvarado (cough)—if they are well informed. Don't assign band interviews to contributors because a certain company is advertising with us. Let contributors' interests and excitements guide what's covered, then instruct them through the process.

Having put in five prior years at *Flipside*, I had developed a short to-do list if I branched out on my own and took the helm. Here's that list:

- 1.) Community over celebrity.
- 2.) People over big business.
- Majors and indies operating as majors can suck it.
- 3.) Family over gang. Pride's one thing. Prejudice is another.
- 4.) Carefully considered content over drama and on-page battles.
- No letters page.
- 5.) Inclusion

AD / CONTRIBUTOR DEADLINES

ISSUE #51

June 1st, 2009

ISSUE #52

August 1st, 2009

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Cover artwork by Kiyoshi Nakazawa
www.luckynakazawa.com

This issue is dedicated to the memory of Erika Hynes, who sent us the cutest otter pictures ever. It's also dedicated to the birth of a kickass kid, Roan Grosso Garcia.



"You should do your own zine, you dumb bastard."

"Todd, you really should." Without Vanessa Burt's and Paddy

Costello's motivational speakings, *Razorcake* probably wouldn't exist today.

over cliquishness. 6.) Interview bands once and only once, no matter how badass the band. 7.) Ambassadorship over assholeishness. 8.) Music over music industry. 9.) History over histrionics. 10.) Treat others how we want to be treated. 11.) "Fuck, dude, I'm tired of being sold to." 12.) Live show reviews go on the website so they're timelier. 13.) A firewall between editorial and advertising. No pay-for-columns-inches bullshit.

During the past eight-and-a-half years, there were many times when I thought I had shot *Razorcake* in the foot by being overly cautious. Zines around us were going glossy and perfect bound (that nice book-like spine), touting massive print runs, garnering both national praise and high advertising prices. *Razorcake* chugged along, covering bands we loved, artists we admired, and addressed politics in carefully considered doses. The biggest awards we won were bowling trophies. One is very tall.

On the other side of the dial, *Razorcake* has dealt with more than its share of "Revolution now. Let's burn this motherfucker down. Fuck The Man," anarchism-inspired individuals who ended up screwing us for zines sent or services rendered. Ideas are one thing. Pragmatically navigating this complicated world without hiding under the cape of an "ism" is another. We've always been pretty assy at being banner wavers. We just ask that people operating under our umbrella be nice.

Razorcake's own choice of independence has never been a witch hunt against others. Music is one thing all of us can largely control our intake of. For many of our contributors, music is an essential ingredient to live a life worth living. I'll be honest; it feels good that we can control a small part of our own lives. Thank the powers that be that fantastic DIY punk rock is still being made spontaneously all over the world and we get to interact with it at the ground level.

Keep your ears brave and thirsty.

Issue #50! Woo! Fuck yeah!

—Todd Taylor

Contact *Razorcake* via our regularly updated website, www.razorcake.org or PO Box 42129, LA, CA 90042

"Freedom isn't just something you have for the sake of having, you have to want something else first and then want the freedom to fight for it." —Max Brooks, *World War Z: An Oral History of the Zombie War*

THANK YOU: Mustache power! Activate! thanks to Kiyoshi Nakazawa for super-heroing Tiltwheel, and rockin' the cover and the pull-out poster illos.; It takes a Nation Of A Million Amandas to hold us back thanks for Amanda's Liz O. illo.; It'd be awesome if we had little Lego versions of ourselves in our heads that we could have do our bidding thanks to Steve Larder for his illo in Amy's column; Lightning bolts from Nerb's underwear and how it relates to his penis thanks to Ryan Gelatin for his illos.; Even as a wee lad, Dale's head was prodigious, "Head, mooove" thanks to Danny Martin for his illo.; "Mitch, why is there a bear?" "I like bears to show up in stuff randomly sometimes just because it makes me laugh. No other reason than that," thanks to Mitch Clem for his illos. in Nardwuar's column; The first-ever *Razorcake* meeting had more French fries, less champagne, but otherwise it might as well be a photograph thanks to Claire Cronin for her illo. in Gary's column; Everything got broke except our spirit thanks to Brad Beshaw for his illo. in Sean's column; Chicken has no eyeholes in the side of his head—disoriented, focused, beer-powered—thanks to Joe Kirschling for his photo in the Chicken's column; Was it Bitzcore that released those records that looked like circular saw blades in the '90s? thanks to Jason Armadillo for his illo. in Jim's column; Shell and Shag interviewed themselves for their Shellshag interview and it was so far from gratuitous self-promotion that I just have to smile and go "Absolutely, thank you" to them; Nate Gangelhoff is trying to download this sheet of paper to his Kindle right now (I say the wait will be a decade, minimum) thanks to Sam North, Keith Rosson, Kelly Lone, and Nick Johnson for their help with the Banner Pilot interview; Math-wise, I know, I know, it's thirteen percent of the entire issue thanks to Lauren Measure, Jeff Proctor, Shanty Cheryl, and Lisa Weiss for their help on the Tiltwheel (Part I) interview; "Dude, a baby with a razor is funny if you make it cute" thanks to Brendan Cosgrove for his graphic design help; The word count for all the reviews we tackle in a two-month period is more than the traditional novella thanks to the following for their record, book, zine, and DVD reviews: Jimmy Alvarado, Billups Allen, N.L. Dewart, Ryan Horkey, Stevo, Kurt Morris, Dave Rohm, Keith Rosson, Bryan Static, Ty Stranglehold, Matt Average, Jennifer Federico, Jeremy Jones, Vincent Battilana, Rene Navarro, CT Terry, Adrian Salas, Jeff Proctor, Sean Koepenick, Art Ettinger, Dave Williams, MP Johnson, Joe Evans III, Andrew Flanagan, Will Kwiatkowski, Speedway Randy, Donlovescats, Lord Kveldulf, Kristen K., Mike Frame, Evan Katz, Craven Rock, Sean Stewart, Lauren Trout; These people walked through our doors and helped with stuff that needed gettin' done: Juan Espinosa, Ever Velasquez, Joe Dana, Jeremy Jones, Jeff Proctor, Matt Average, Rene Navarro, and Donreallylovescats; Special thanks to Mary-Clare Stevens.

I HATE POSUERS!

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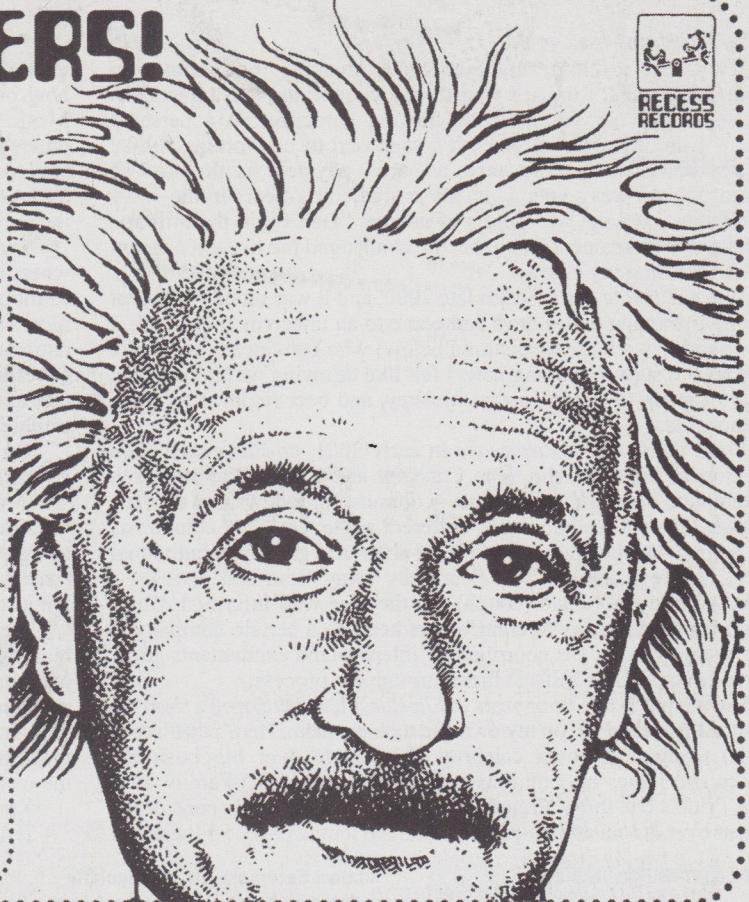
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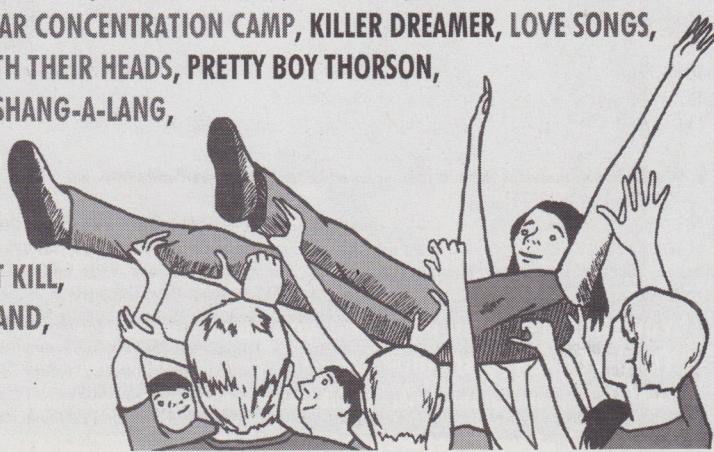


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RAZORCAKE

Issue #50 June / July 2009

PO Box 42129
Los Angeles, CA 90042
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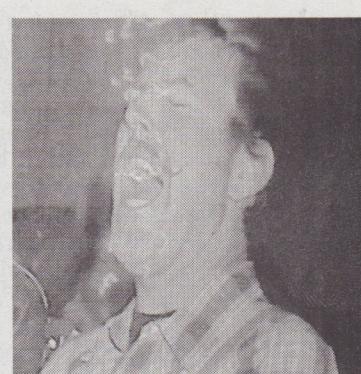
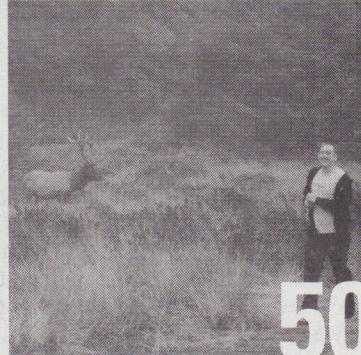
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Razorcake is bi-monthly. Issues are \$4.00 ppd. in the U.S. Yearly subscriptions (six issues) are \$16.00 bulk rate or \$22.00 first class mail. Plus you get some free gooch. These prices are only valid for people who live in the U.S. and are not in prison. Issues and subs are more for everyone else (because we have to pay more in postage). Visit the www.razorcake.org for a price. Prisoners may receive free single issues of Razorcake via Prison Lit. Project, c/o Bound Together Books, 1369 Haight St., SF, CA 94117 or Books to Prisoners, 92 Pike St., Box A, Seattle, WA 98101 (who don't ship to CA prisons). Want to distribute Razorcake? Email us via the "distro" link on the website. "The verb ramoner, which I'd never seen before but which grabbed my attention, as it would any Ramones fan. According to the dictionary, it literally means "to scrub out or scrub a chimney." —Frank Portman, King Dork



GUERRILLA MY DREAMS

LIZ O

"I could work outside of the system and still make things happen."



Razorcake: Totally Different Head. TOTALLY.

When I was a little girl, no more than six, my mom let me stay up to watch *Square Pegs* with her. It was one of our favorite shows and, for the brief time it was on the air, I was smitten with Johnny Slash. He may have been my first crush. If not, then Nick Rhodes only trumped him by a few months.

Johnny Slash was the coolest geek in a TV high school. He was tall and skinny with bleached hair, dark shades, clothes you couldn't find in a suburban mall, and a Walkman perennially plugged into his ears. He was quiet, sort of shy, but seemed to have some deep understanding that there was more to life than being part of the crowd. He had a catchphrase too, "Not punk, new wave. Totally different head. Totally."

That line stuck with me for decades after the show disappeared from the airwaves.

I'm not a punk. Never have been. Never will be. Maybe for five minutes I thought that perhaps I was one, but it was a passing sensation. This much had become obvious by the time I hit my teens in the mid-1990s. By then, I had discovered that the Clash were gods, but mostly because of their disco recordings; PIL had it all over the Sex Pistols any day and my favorite Siouxsie And The Banshees song was "Dazzle," a single so heavily orchestrated that the only thing it had in common with the band's London punk years was Siouxsie's voice.

I wasn't a punk, but a lot of my friends were—the result of all being some sort of outsider in school. Sometimes, those friends would drag me to shows, cramped, dive-y sort of events that reeked of cheap beer and sweat. I would arrive overdressed and cower in a corner hoping that the mosh pit came nowhere near me. In the car, my friends would play the latest CDs and I would politely pretend to enjoy the sound,

but the pop stuff was too whiny and the hardcore stuff was too grating. I wanted keyboards and nightclubs where the people looked like aliens dressed in Vivienne Westwood. But this was the mid-1990s, and that was something hard to find.

By the time I was in college it wasn't just that I didn't feel like a punk, it was that I grew to hate everything that I saw associated with it. The guys at the shows would try to talk about individuality, and I would stare and think that their mosh pits looked like fraternity hazing rituals. I cringed when kids from my private high school started spiking their hair and heading down to Melrose Avenue to panhandle while holding bags of new clothes from Retail Slut. I rolled my eyes when every dumb jock with a Green Day record started giving me an attitude about my love of dance music and that "weird goth stuff." By the end of the decade, I had come to the conclusion that the punk that people discussed didn't really exist. It was just bored kids from the suburbs wreaking havoc, while listening to albums that had been pre-approved by MTV and commercial radio.

Then I met Todd through Flipside, joined the Razorcake crew when it was launched, and punk became something completely different.

I started writing for *Razorcake* shortly after graduating from college. I just quit my incredibly brief first career as a record label flunky, having grown quickly disillusioned with the business of music. I left that job to embark on career number two—DJing—and was spending most nights in clubs playing either new wave flashbacks or the British pop and electronic hits of today to some success. During the day, I was trying to find a way to launch career number three—writing—with much luck. It wasn't even the crush of rejection that pained me at the time. It was that editors never even bothered to respond to tell me that I was too this or too that to

ever get the story in print. For most people, I wasn't even worth an auto-reply, but Todd seemed to like my work and, after I did a handful of interviews, he let me take over a column.

I called it Guerilla Your Dreams based on a suggestion from some dudes who are better with titles than I am. It made sense on both a personal level and in connection with *Razorcake*'s mission. Just as the magazine was carving out its own place in newsstands where the selections seemed to be growing either too conservative or too self-consciously hip, so was I trying to create an identity as a writer. It's not enough to simply try to mesh with the rest of the society; we have to make our own place in it.

My first piece was about going to an Armenian Genocide protest outside of the Turkish consulate. After that, the column took various turns. Sometimes I flashed back to childhood and adolescent memories, like the serial killer who ravaged our neighborhood and my obsession with Morrissey. Other times, I did something akin to reporting: meeting with two brothers who turned a violent crime into a charity event, heading out to Ron Paul rallies and anime conventions, or looking for people who were choosing their own paths and weren't afraid to be labeled for that.

I have no doubt that most of the stories I've written for *Razorcake*, would have been rejected by any other editor. They were too weird and probably too opinionated for the mainstream, and too weird and probably not opinionated enough for the underground. But, Todd understood and appreciated my work. Rarely, I heard back from someone who, for whatever reason, thought that a piece wasn't appropriate for the publication, a sentiment that felt like a short, stabbing pain. But one of the first lessons of writing, probably of life, is that there are going to be people who don't think you belong where you are. And if

We never quite fit in anywhere,



NATION OF AMANDA



**not with the hipsters,
not with normals,
and not even with the other
proponents of underground
movements.**

an upstart publication can persist when so many similar ones have folded, then I can keep going too.

Years after my first *Razorcake* story, I'm at a point where I can actually list writer as my occupation on my tax forms. I've edited a magazine, landed a cover story in a major publication, and found out that a few pieces have spread like viruses across the Internet. And the even stranger thing is that I got the bulk of this work by staying true to the voice and interests that I thought made me a freak years ago. None of this would have happened without *Razorcake*.

Razorcake taught me more than just how to keep readers interested throughout the course of 1,500 to 1,800 words. It taught me that I could work outside of the system and still make things happen.

This was the lesson of bands like Black Flag, the Minutemen, and Minor Threat. Punk lessons, you could say, but ones that perhaps mean nothing to so many people who claim the word as their own.

Razorcake managed to do this without preaching. Never once did I hear some diatribe about what punk should or shouldn't be, as had been the case with a lot of other associates I've had over the years. The guys at HQ simply created an open forum for us, leading more by example than mere words. We've never been limited to a certain sect of genre-approved bands or subject matter. There is never any discussion as to catering to our audience and certainly no mention of how we can appear hipper to readers. Our only confines are the word count and the parameters of our imagination.

Back in 1982, I was too young to realize that the misfits on *Square Pegs* were just actors, and that for them, playing nerds may not have been much different from playing big city sex columnists with ridiculously expensive shoe collections. For many, in real life, that role is just as brief as a one-season TV gig. They grow up, learn how to blend in with the rest of the world, and go on to lead mild-mannered lives. For some, the square peg tag will remain. We never quite fit in anywhere—not with the hipsters, not with normals, and not even with the other proponents of underground movements. And for those of us who will never be able to squeeze into the peg board, there is *Razorcake*.

Totally different head, totally.

—Liz



"The only thing that matters is right now. Punk rock brain surgery."

Together Again for the First Time

1.

Everyone remembers their first time. First kiss. First car. First night in jail.

Okay, maybe not everyone has the same firsts, but everyone reading this zine, particularly those who've been with us for all fifty issues, can probably remember with diamond-like clarity their first record¹, first T-shirt², first show³.

We carry the memory of these experiences around with us at all times. We display our flyers and ticket stubs on private altars. We decorate our clothing with patches and pins so that others in the tribe will recognize us. We mark our bodies to create a permanent record of the pleasure and the pain.

These firsts are more than memories; they are thresholds. They represent the moment we came to accept that we weren't like other people. That we were fundamentally different from our parents, our peers, our society. We cherish these firsts because they remind us of who we are and, more importantly, who we aren't.

As for me, I'm obsessed with a first I never had.

2.

It's 1987. I'm nineteen years old and I'm snorting speed with a skinhead in Ocean Beach, California. We're both sailors stationed on the same ship, something we try our best to forget.

We're listening to records in his apartment and making tapes to take with us when our ship embarks on a six-month tour of the Western Pacific. We're gacked to the gills and have nowhere to go, no place to be but here. This is something we do a lot, but every night is another first: The Dickies, Bad Religion, T.S.O.L., The Freeze. It's all new to me, a middle-class white kid from Falls Church, Virginia, a tiny little town across the Potomac River from Washington D.C., and I love every minute of it.

My shipmate starts to figure what I love versus what I merely like. He selects a record and puts it on the turntable. "Dude, wait until you hear this." He says this every time, but for some reason it's clear to both of us that this time he really means it.

1. The Ramones, *Rocket to Russia*.

2. The Ramones, presidential logo, on a baseball T-shirt with black sleeves that I bought with money I saved from my paper route. I cut the sleeves off when I got home.

3. The Ramones, Wax Museum, Washington D.C. 1983.

The band is Minor Threat. The record is *Out of Step*. It takes off the top of my speed-addled, sleep-deprived head. If this is what it feels like to be out of step, I never want to be in step again. I am overpowered by a desire to snort more speed and listen to this record again and again and again. My past tears away and disintegrates. My future is rendered speculative and meaningless. The only thing that matters is right now. Punk rock brain surgery. I will never be the same⁴.

3.

Sitting on the carpet of that shitty Ocean Beach apartment with my pegged jeans and spiffy new Doc Martens, I turned over the record sleeve and was jolted out of my bliss: the address for how to get in touch with the band was a post office box in Falls Church, not far from the outer limit of my paper route.

For the rest of my stint in the Navy, I held on to that record the way a drowning man clings to a life preserver. The band came to symbolize home—a home I never knew and thus didn't have to be ashamed of. But as the years passed, the link frayed, the connection weakened.

I went back to Virginia to go to school and the ordinariness of my life before I enlisted in the Navy reasserted itself. As I learned more about the D.C. hardcore scene, I berated myself for missing out on something so staggeringly important. When *Out of Step* was released, I was a freshman in high school. How could I have missed it? I began to despise the kid who was too shy, too timid, and too scared to find out about the scene that was exploding under his nose.

For years I've wondered what my life would have been like if someone had handed me a flyer for a show. How would my life have changed if instead of drinking outrageous amounts of beer in backyards after football games, I'd had the balls to barge into a basement show? What if I had gone to one of the now epic Minor Threat performances? What if Ian and I had become friends, homeboys? Would that kid have joined the Navy? Would that person have gone to a third-rate party school of a college just because his parents wanted him to? Would that man have settled for a soul-

4. To this day, when a record gets its hooks in me, I give myself up entirely and listen to it as many times as necessary. It's not a question of turning it off when I'm done with the record; I stop when the record is done with me. It's the same way with booze, drugs, etc.

crushing job churning out advertisements for an Indian casino?

I am haunted not so much by the questions, but by the answers I think I know.

4.

If only I had *Razorcake*. If *Razorcake* had been invented, I would have been all over the D.C. hardcore scene. If *Razorcake* had been in circulation when I was a fourteen-year-old paperboy listening to whatever shitty recordings I could get my hands on⁵, I would have listened to much better bands—or at least more aggressive ones. If I'd read *Razorcake* when I was a kid instead of comic books and sword and sorcery novels, I probably would have had a violent confrontation with my impossible-to-please father and as a result of that confrontation I probably never would have tried to please him by enlisting in the Navy and it's pretty much impossible to imagine what my life would have been like if I'd taken another path, although, needless to say, with my best buddy Ian by my side it would have been pretty awesome, though it stands to reason that I would have influenced Ian in some meaningful way, gotten him off the whole straight edge thing, and lengthened the band's career by at least another album, which means you can probably say goodbye to all those Fugazi records. All because the magazine you're holding in your hands didn't exist⁶. Kind of makes your brain hurt, doesn't it?

5.

These what ifs raise another question: Do kids still use zines to find out about punk rock? Have MySpace, Facebook, and the proliferation of instant messaging and texting technology made zines obsolete?

True story about the way times are changing: I was looking for a book on my book shelves. I could remember the title but not the author. I went online, looked up the book, found the author's name, and located the book on my alphabetized shelves.

I'm not really sure what that says about how people find things or how my mind

5. Devo, Pat Benatar, the Ramones, and the Surf Punks. Yes, the Surf Punks. This choice seems inexplicable to me now, but I won't apologize for it even though I probably should.

6. Note to the Editor: I don't blame you for any of this. After all, you were only ten. Your parents should have had you sooner. I'm gonna have to talk to Tony and Marge about this.

works, but I think we can all agree that we live in a world where a privileged few have near-instant access to an incomprehensibly vast amount of information.

An example: someone tells you about a French punk rock band. Before, you would have had to make a trip to the record store and ask for the record and then keep an eye on the bin where they stashed the weird stuff. "Has it come in yet?" you'd ask and after the fourth or fifth time the guy behind the counter would feel sorry for you and order it and if you were lucky you'd buy it before someone else snatched it up. Now you can Google the band name, watch their videos on YouTube, check out their songs on MySpace, and download songs from iTunes -- all in about fifteen minutes from a computer in Topeka, Kansas or Jakarta, Indonesia.

I hear what you're saying. Punk rock isn't *information*. It's a 120-second aural assault, a heartfelt protest, a beatific yawp, a cry for help, whatever. But whatever it is, it isn't *information*. And the people who listen to punk rock aren't consumers, but a community. Granted it's an irascible, ill-tempered community prone to violence and substance abuse, but a group of like-minded lost souls nonetheless. *Razorcake* is a lifeline. It connects us to people, to each other.

Try this on for size: A zine is nothing but an old school social networking device made out of ink and paper.

8.

I know this because of the countless ways my life has been enriched by *Razorcake*. Whether it's a bartender buying me drinks because of my *Razorcake* T-shirt, bookstore owners flogging my book and supporting me while I'm on tour, or people who have let me into their lives and by doing so changed mine forever. Not because of *Razorcake*, but because of the people who read it.

Razorcake is more than a collection of interviews and record reviews. If it was just that, *Razorcake* would have gone the way of the dodo a long time ago. It's always been about giving people access to the music we love. So maybe the question isn't *Is this a world that needs Razorcake?* but *What kind of world would it be without it?*

I, for one, don't want to find out because I'm about to embark on another first. And not just one, but a whole gang of them: First show, first band interview, first road trip—all without alcohol or drugs. I'm embarking on a journey I never thought I'd take. I'm embarrassed and more than little terrified. How do you go to a show that takes off the top of your head without doing the equivalent with liquor and beer and whatever else you can get your hands on?

I don't know. I suspect I'll get the hang of it—eventually—but in many ways I feel like the scared paperboy all over again, walking around in the dark, stuck inside my head, afraid of what I'm going to find if I stray



ARMADILLO 2009

JASON ARMADILLO

When *Out of Step* was released, I was a freshman in high school. How could I have missed it?

from my route. I know what's waiting for me and it's not good.

But I know I'm not the first person to walk this path. I know it's a fight that many of *Razorcake*'s readers have fought and continue to fight. And I'm counting on you to show me the way, to tell me how it's done.

I may be too old for firsts, but it's way too early for lasts.

Thanks for making *Razorcake* *Razorcake*. Thanks for doing your part.

—Jim Ruland

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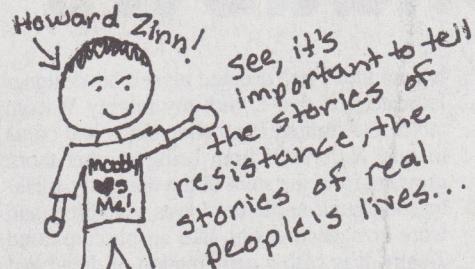
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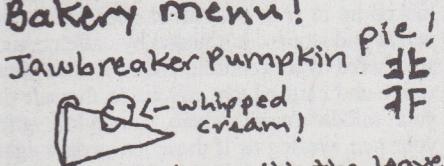
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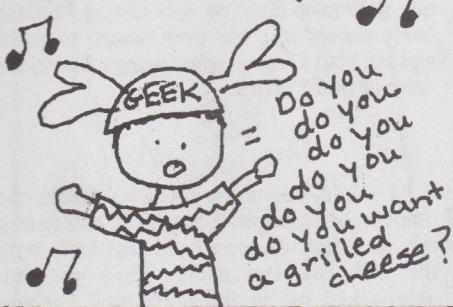
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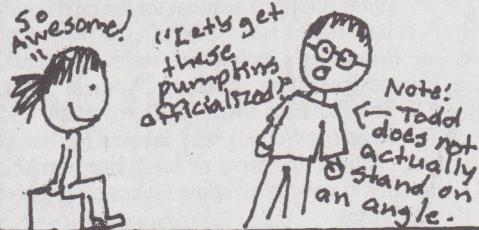
Being dumb enough to let me write for them!



Rev. Nørb!



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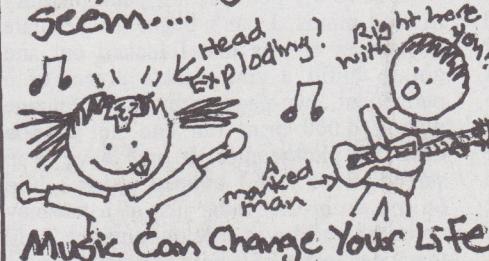
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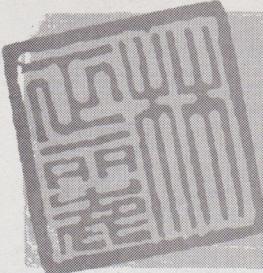
Understanding that, silly though it might seem...



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At Sugar-infused thank you to Sean + Todd! 50 issues! Punk Rock!



MONSTER OF FUN

AMY ADOYZIE

"I was young(er) and wore arrogance easily, like an obscure band T-shirt."

Casting Shadows

It was at a pizza place, off one of the main boulevards in Highland Park, before or after a show at Mr. T's Bowl. Or, was it a reading at a local community arts space? Was that the night I missed my friend's band's set because I was smoking in the parking lot, or the time I audibly fell asleep during a writer's slideshow inspiration of his latest book? This may be the reason I have a poor memory as a defense mechanism for all the inconsiderate, unthinking things I've done. Who wants to remember all the times we tipped less than twenty percent or flaked on our friends when they needed us? I sure as hell don't want to relive those moments. Despite my brain's ability to conveniently forget these myriad of asshole behavior perpetrated by my own jerkiness, there remains a plethora of cringe-inducing memories that flutter and flash across my mind during odd moments of chopping vegetables or as I'm on my way out the front door.

One of the memories that has not left me was at that dimly lit pizza joint. I can't remember if we sat on benches or plastic molded chairs bolted to the ground. I can't recall if I ate a slice of cheese or two slices of veggie. I'm not sure if I had a Coke or shared a fountain cup with Bradley. The details escape me with the exception of a conversation between Todd and me.

This was only four years ago, but in hindsight it feels longer because I was so emboldened with the obliviousness and courage of youth. I approached Todd, completely unprompted, and offered, "You should lemme design a cover."

Todd didn't know me from Adam, or the kid behind the pizza counter, nor did he have an acute understanding that while I lack standards in all the things that matter (food, beer, boyfriends), I am an unabashed snob concerning the infinite inconsequential details that salt and pepper this buffet of life. Things I can't stand include, but are not limited to: any of the -isms, fluorescent lighting, and bad design. I could probably put up with eating a peanut butter and jelly sandwich, with a side of baby spinach salad and a glass of chilled water at every meal in between coddling a co-dependent boyfriend for the rest of my life if that means I won't have to lay my eyes on another piece of bad design—cluttered with Comic Sans font, plastered with pixelated scans of poorly drawn sketches and predictable composition. Todd

had no idea I had deemed myself his designer laureate, and that I, with my mighty Wacom tablet and limited Photoshop skills had come to save *Razorcake* from being another thorn growing from the stem of the unsightly, mishmashed punk aesthetic. I was young(er) and wore arrogance easily, like an obscure band T-shirt. It is with a combination of dread and admiration that I remember that former self, the kid who knew she knew—so much so that she sauntered up to a punk zine editor and almost demanded that her art should grace the cover of his publication.

"You should lemme do a cover," I said.

Instead of telling me to fuck off, Todd asked, "Why don't you try an interview layout first?"

At the time I failed to recognize that I should have to prove my chops, and that just because I was a cocky kid didn't mean that I could design a lick.

"Sure," I begrudgingly agreed, disappointed that he didn't enthusiastically hold my offer above his head and declare, like a teenage girl, and gush, "Omigod! Amy's gonna, like, make *Razorcake* totally awesome!"

I Photoshopped a layout for the next issue. A couple issues later Todd offered me a spot on *Razorcake*'s columnist roster. To date, I've designed four covers (#29 Alicja Trout, #32 The Bananas, #42 The Tranzmitors, and #43 Reigning Sound), and layouts for bands that continue to thrive or have since broken up only to exist as winding etches on pressed vinyl discs.

Due to my poor memory and inability to read minds, I can't begin to speculate about how it was that I lucked out and got to fulfill a zine punk's dream of a permanent, two-page spread in a fanzine with a 6,000 print run and not drop a dime for photocopies. It may have been serendipitous that I popped up as a blip on the *Razorcake* radar just as a vacancy appeared and I was able to convince Todd that, despite my ESL-ness and fondness for made-up words, I could string sentences together in a quasi-coherent manner. Thus *Monster of Fun* was born, validating the adolescence I spent saving birthday money to print a zine that no one read.

I am grateful that I've been given an outlet for my meanderings. There is a quiet satisfaction in seeing one's words inked into a zine that is a fixture in the squalid bathrooms of punk houses or neatly stacked, like reference guides, beneath growing record collections in suburban teenage bedrooms. Even so, this sense of satisfaction could never obscure a universal truth: There's no glamour in writing.

It's an antisocial and solitary affair, locked up in your own mind rummaging for words and stories. It's fueled by caffeine and smothered by self-consciousness. It blurs your vision and hardens that callous on the side of your middle finger, where you tightly grip your pen, writing as if those moments might cease to exist if they don't reach paper.

Writing for *Razorcake* has provided even more unquantifiables, like exposure to artists and music and connections that lead to friendships and bonding over this singularly ridiculous subculture. As a friend of *Razorcake*, I've also been bestowed the occasional complimentary beer or two. On one particular night, at a northeast Portland basement show, I was even treated to a few sips of Mad Dog—sugary orange flavor, the color of traffic cones.

I could count on my two hands the number of strangers who have recognized me as that *Razorcake* columnist with the awkward last name. Most of them approached me in the punk rock vacuum of Ken Dirtnap's Green Noise record store where I was the clerk who habitually blasted Greg Cartwright over the PA. Outside the bubble of Green Noise, I never expect random folks to mention this column.

We stood in an oblong circle, as small groups of friends tend to do as they wait for something to happen. I could barely make out the familiar faces of friends as they chatted in the dark dirt patch alongside The Ranch punk house. Our small ring broke open. A few guys walked in and immediately mended the loop. My friend Tim introduced us. I reached out to shake Mark's hand.

"You're Amy?" he asked knowingly.
"Yeah?"



STEVE LARDER
www.stevelarder.co.uk

Things I can't stand include, but are not limited to: any of the -isms, fluorescent lighting, and bad design.

"How was China?"

"What? Have we met before?" I was puzzled and slightly embarrassed because I've forgotten my share of acquaintances.

"How's Portland treating you since you got back?" Mark ignored my question with more of his own. This was two summers ago, after I had returned from a year-long volunteer stint in rural China.

"Dude, if we've met before, I sorta don't remember," I said, half apologizing.

"You're the monster of fun, right?"

"Yeah!"

Mark hunched over a bit, lowered his voice, and explained, "I'm a subscriber." He needn't utter another word. We talked about the fanzine and my excitement with being home when I squinted in the dark and noticed that he was hugging a glass flask in the crook of his elbow.

"What's that?" I asked.

It was a bottle of Mad Dog—orange jubilee flavored. I couldn't resist.

"Here, have some." I took a few healthy swigs before handing it back. It settled to the bottom of my belly and mixed with whatever cheap beer I had pilfered from another friend.

We idled around as we waited for the touring band to set up, and finally filed into the basement. I squeezed my way to the front to watch Underground Railroad To Candyland in

all their basement show glory. My eyes searched the room, looking for no one in particular, and soaked in the humidity of all the bodies crammed into such a small space to share the same experience—and there was Mark, right behind me. His hands were full—with Mad Dog in one and a can of beer in the other—and he handed me the bottle of alcoholic orange juice without saying a word. *Damn, I love making new friends at shows*, I thought.

Todd C. and company began banging out songs from their *Bird Roughs* LP. The entire basement danced like we were on a *Pee Wee's Playhouse* special where every word of every song was the secret word and we had to hoop and holler in celebration.

A couple songs in I felt a peculiar sensation, a very distinct gesture that I've only ever had the pleasure of experiencing on occasions where I've been drunk on Long Island iced teas and there is massive hip-hop being thumped out of speakers in some developing-nation dance club. I looked back and found Mark, the dude I just met a half an hour earlier, with this free hand on my hip and his crotch grinding my booty. Nothing says *Welcome Back to America* like an unexpected faux-freak-booty dance. Nothing says *This Dude is a Razorcake Subscriber* like an unexpected booty dance in a basement punk show.

Three hard drives, stories from all across south/southeast/east Asia and the United States, dozens of scribbled journal pages, millions of pixels and one-dude's-junk-all-up-on-my-ass later, and we're still here. All because I was a pompous dick and Todd didn't tell me to go fuck myself.

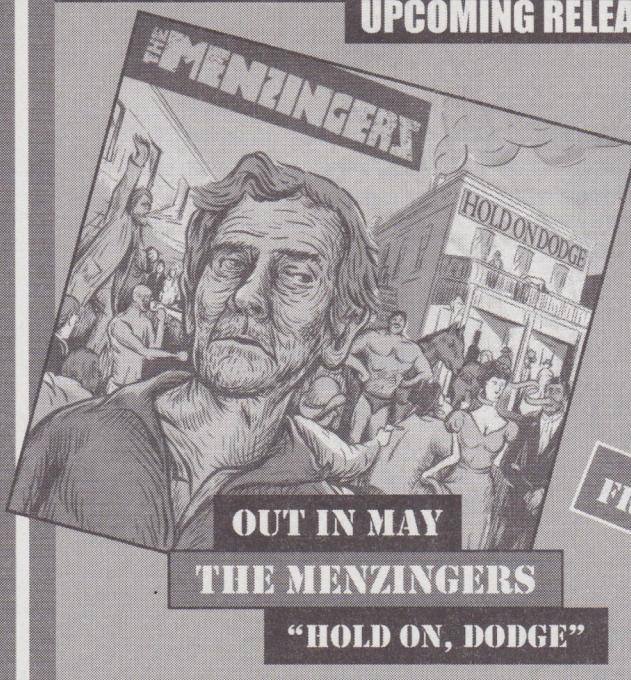
* * *

The letters, at 9 point Times New Roman, tumble off pages just as each strum of those taut wires burst out of amplifiers like a flood exploding from a broken dam. The stories and songs, in and of themselves, exist because we've assigned meaning to them and agree that they exist. But the stories and the songs, in and of themselves, do not cast shadows. They do not stand before the heat of the sun or beneath the soft glare of streetlamps to form long stretches of grey on dark pavement. But we do. The stories and the songs exist because we created them, laying down a shadow with every motion we make.

There is proof we existed.
This is proof we exist.

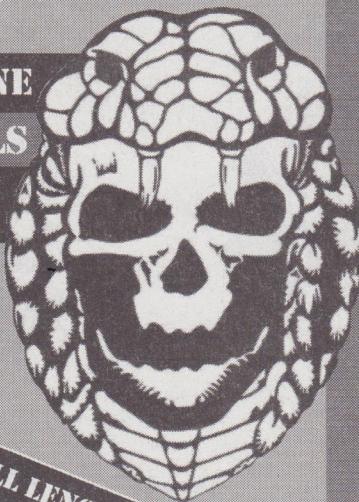
—Amy Adoyzie
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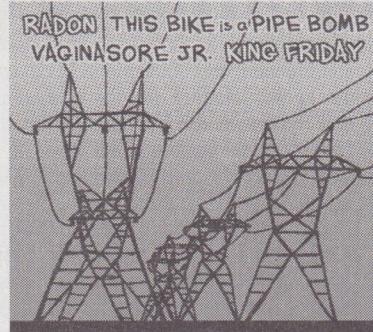
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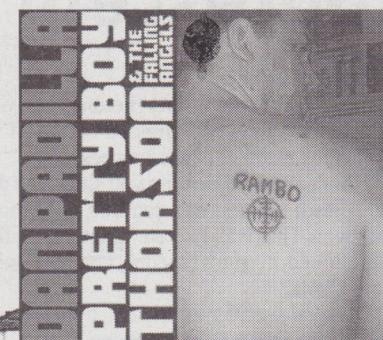


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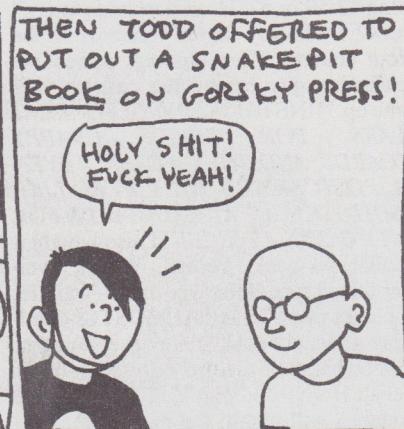


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THE RECORDS I PLAYED ON MY RAZORCAKE PODCAST AND HOW THEY RELATE TO MY PENIS

...let the record show that i'm not really into the idea of writing a *Razorcake* column about *Razorcake* itself. I think it's kinda dopey and self-referential. However, in most popular dictionaries, next to the phrase "dopey and self-referential," there's a photo of me, Rev. Nørb, filling out a Wonderlic® test with a finger dipped in Jell-O™ chocolate pudding while my other hand holds up a framed, autographed picture of me, Rev. Nørb, filling out a Wonderlic® test with a finger dipped in Jell-O™ chocolate pudding while my other hand holds up a framed, autographed picture of me, Rev. Nørb, filling out a Wonderlic® test with a finger dipped in Jell-O™ chocolate pudding in a mortifyingly beautiful infinite recursion of pudding and fingers and dopeyness, so i guess i'm in! Sidestepping the rather thorny problem of writing about relationships formed on accounta *Razorcake* ((as *Razorcake* columnists are generally only in it for the pussy)) ((except for Maddy)) ((no, just kidding, she's also only in it for the pussy)), i figure i'll exercise my right to blather about anything even tangentially *Razorcake*-related by emitting a column entitled...

THE RECORDS I PLAYED ON MY RAZORCAKE PODCAST AND HOW THEY RELATE TO MY PENIS

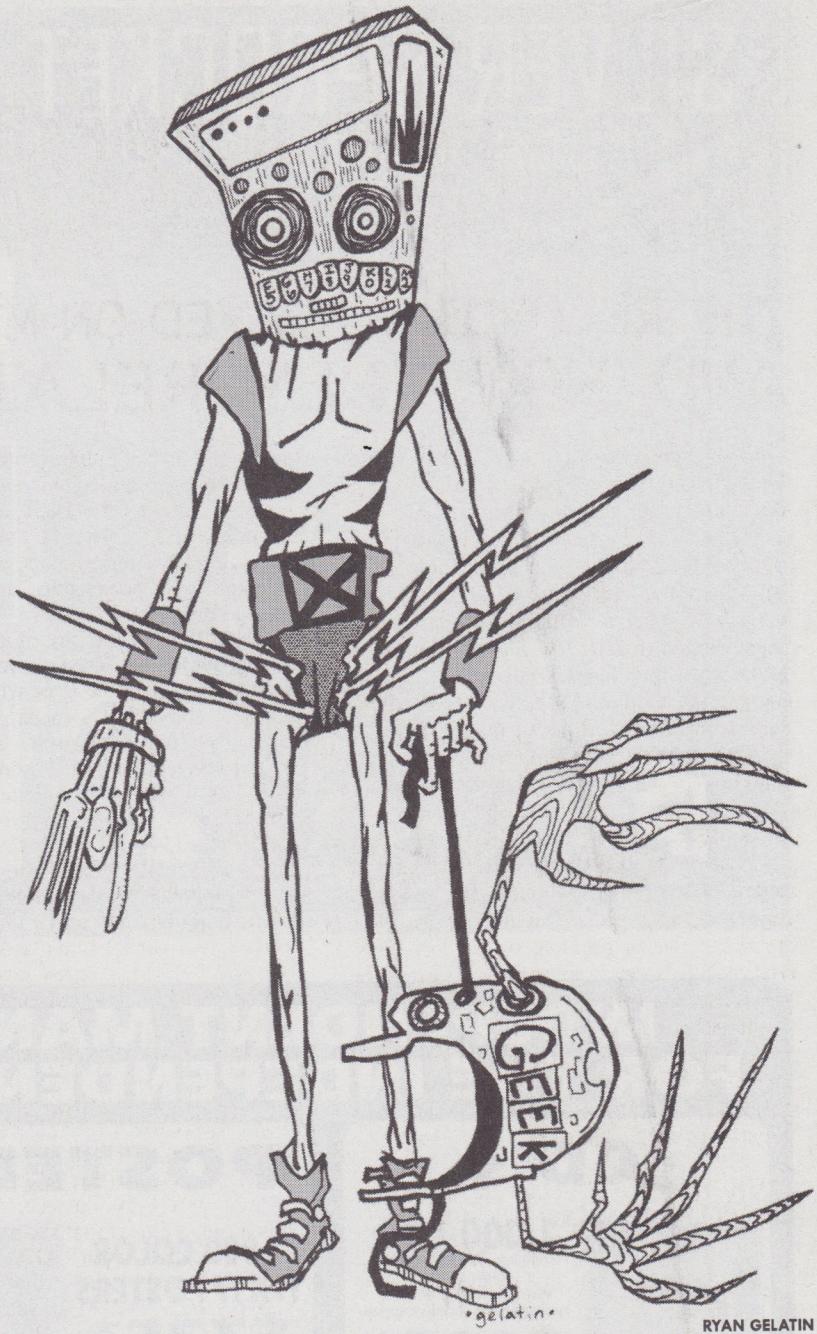
...but first, a slight historical background as to the conditions in which said podcasts were germinated! Last year, i was in Hollywood for bidness for two days, attending the 2008 *Nintendo® Wii™ Summit* ((yes, that's right, it was a fucking SUMMIT. Not a convention, not a trade show, but a SUMMIT! The veritable *ne plus ultra* of *Nintendo® Wii™-ness!* The mind boggles)), where i heard the term "linear responsometer" more times in a thirty-six-hour period than most people will experience in multiple lifetimes. My takeaway from the whole affair: Hollywood is stupid. I mean, *really* stupid. We were right around the corner from the handprints in the cement; that was pretty cool. It was also cool that Godzilla has his own star in the sidewalk, although i'm not sure what Hollywood has to do with Godzilla, 'cause that movie with Matthew Broderick sucked and all the other Godzilla movies were of Japanese manufacture. It seems cool at first that everyone you meet in the service industry—the bartenders, the food servers, the guys behind the cash register at the convenience

stores—are all so outgoing and personable and charming, until you realize that the bartenders, the food servers, and the guys behind the cash register at the convenience stores are all wannabe actors, who are being outgoing and personable and charming because they think they're going to be "discovered" by some guy in a beret named "J.B." or something. Then you kind of want to just punch them in the eyes with a fistful of pencils or something. I mean, I went to the store across the street from our hotel and grabbed seven postcards. I didn't see a price on 'em or anything, but, i mean, postcards aren't usually cost-sensitive items, ya know? Like, what am i gonna say, "excuse me, sir, do you know if these crappy, trite postcards are two for a dollar or three for a dollar? It's terribly important to me to know if i'll be spending \$3.50 or \$2.34 on postcards today," ya know? I take my seven postcards to the checkout counter. The outgoing, personable and charming guy behind the cash register rings me up. NINE BUCKS. NINE FUCKING DOLLARS FOR SEVEN CRAPPY POSTCARDS, AND THEY WEREN'T EVEN COOL POSTCARDS!!! THEY WERE LIKE THE SHIT YOU GET AT WAL-MART® FOR TWENTY CENTS A PIECE!!! I also bought a nine-dollar six-pack. Yeeesh. What's even dumber than a nine-dollar six-pack—wait, let me re-phrase that—what's ALMOST as dumb as a nine-dollar six-pack is how everything in Hollywood has to be themed with some sort of cheeseball Hollywood *qua* Hollywood theme ((although, i will admit, the math is there to support such a thing)). Like, there was this big party for all the conference attendees at the hotel one of the nights, and, above and beyond the free booze and food ((a trillion-dollar value, given local market conditions)), the powers-that-be felt compelled to stock the party with Charlie Chaplin and Marilyn Monroe imitators. I mean, what's the point? We're out of town on business; we just want to eat like pigs and get fucked up—i don't need some dude with a Hitler mustache twirling his fucking cane and grabbing his hat weirdly when i'm trying to two-fist imported beers on my way to the bathroom, ya know? Dumber still, the entire party was themed with all these hokey decorations—movie cameras and film reels and director's chairs and shit—like some sort of Showbiz® Pizza for drunken grownups. It struck me as the same type of local yokelism as one might see at a similar party in Green

"Parentheses kind of give me a boner."

Bay ((though Titletown has been shockingly remiss on *Nintendo® Wii™ Summits* as of late)), except that in Green Bay the party would be themed with a bunch of footballs and goalposts and Packer helmets and shit. They had a bunch of huge statues of movie stars scattered hither and yon, including, troublingly, a statue of the Blues Brothers. I turned to some random person drinking next to me and said, "*What the fuck? That movie was filmed in Chicago, not Hollywood.*" The guy said, in complete seriousness, "*Well, it was produced by a Hollywood studio.*" Oh, well then THAT'S okay. They probably wiped their asses with Green Bay toilet paper on the set too; i guess this means we too can also now embrace the Blues Brothers as our own. ANYWAY! The Nintendo-based malarkey eventually drew to a close, and Todd, our faithful editor, kindly extracted us from the land of the nine-dollar six-pack and transported us to the marginally more logical land of *Razorcake* HQ, where i was made aware of a number of stunningly bizarre facts: 1) Lemons actually DO grow on trees, so i guess i owe Trini Lopez dinner; 2) There are some people on this planet that do not find the concept of outdoor washers & dryers at all odd. Be that as it may, my co-worker and i had several hours to kill before our redeye flight back to the land of indoor laundry and three-dollar six-packs, and, as agreed upon earlier, i had hauled a stack of 45s along with me with which to create a *Razorcake* podcast ((which are, of course, quite audible at www.razorcake.org)) since i wasn't cool with hauling a bunch of 12-inch vinyl on the plane with me, and CDs were Not Of The Revolution. Todd escorted me into the *Razorcake Electrical Turntable Command Hold*, or R.E.T.C.H., sat me down in front of a microphone, two turntables, and a case of Pabst®, and we went, as the kids say, to town. Being of sound mind and body, i led off with "**This Is Rock & Roll**" by **TEENGENERATE**. What can i say? This IS rock 'n' roll! Once, during the NCAA March Madness™ college basketball tournament, i took sixty-four 45s and had a 45 tournament, which lasted four nights. This record—the "Wild Wild Teengenerate" ep, consisting of three covers of Belgian punks, The Kids, actually won the tournament ((in a tragic and fateful sidenote, nothing ever became of my 45 tournament once i realized that i seeded the brackets the wrong way—i did it NFL playoffs style, where the highest seed always plays the

lowest seed in any given round, but, for basketball, the brackets are established in advance, and it's not always the highest-seeded team playing the lowest-seeded team if a lower-seeded team upsets a higher-seeded team. I was so mortified that i fucked this up that i never wrote the article i had intended to write about the whole affair, even though it was like four nights of heavy drinking and record-listening gone to waste, oh horrors!). I mean, this thing IS rock 'n' roll—it's like a goddamn jet engine subtly attuned to the various operational frequencies of the human nervous system. The original Kids version of "This is Rock & Roll" is pretty good, but the Teengenerate cover is absolutely amazing—every eeny weeny sonic space herein is filled with ROCK, it's like if you took whatever process makes the pink stuff in the middle of 3 Musketeers® candy bars fluffy, and reversed it, THAT'S this record. It's ROARIN'! It's ROCKIN'! It's also self-referential and dopey, because IT IS ROCK 'N' ROLL, and it said so itself! Kamikaze Nutella®! It surely gets no better than this. I own something like ten copies of this record, and it occupies the Q4 slot on my Rock-Ola 440 jukebox ((Psychedelic model)). I would go so far as to say that anyone who DOESN'T start a podcast off with "This is Rock & Roll" by Teengenerate is very likely a homosexual, except possibly for Nardwuar, because he would probably be compensated by the Canadian government for starting his podcasts off with the Barenaked Ladies instead. *AND HOW IT RELATES TO MY PENIS:* With two songs on the A-side and one on the flip, one side is strangely longer than the other. Slogging forward with a merry Belgium-O-Centric motif, i followed up Teengenerate with "Pogo Pogo" by PLASTIC BERTRAND, which is the b-side of the ubiquitous "Ca Plane Pour Moi." Generally, i have credited my One Great Punk Rock Eureka Epiphany Moment as being the day i heard "Do You Wanna Dance?" by the Ramones being played over the radio on WKAU-AM as i rode home from the Prange-Way® discount store in the back of my family's 1977 Buick® LeSabre. I have often described the orgasm-like state unexpectedly brought upon by my initial exposure to the Ramones as being like my brain licking the terminals of a nine-volt battery whilst my spine was eating SweeTarts®. However, giving full credit to the Ramones being the only punk rock i was exposed to before i actually knew what the fuck punk rock was is a slight oversimplification: I had also heard "Ca Plane Pour Moi" over the radio ((probably the same station—WKAU—which was just a normal Top 40 AM radio station that happened to suck slightly less than the rest of the Top 40 AM stations. Interestingly, the first Boris the Sprinkler 45 was put out on Trouser Cough Records, which was run by a gentleman known as Jason Rerun. Jason's dad was a DJ at WKAU in the 70's and 80's, so—get your head around



I have often described the orgasm-like state unexpectedly brought upon by my initial exposure to the Ramones as being like my brain licking the terminals of a nine-volt battery whilst my spine was eating SweeTarts®.

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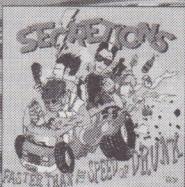
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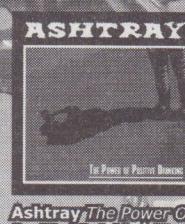
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PRINTING AND REPLICATION FOR INDEPENDENT RECORD LABELS AND BANDS SINCE 1994

this—the dad of the guy who released my band's first record might actually be the guy who first exposed me to punk rock in 1978. Better than that “the dad of the guy who released my band's first record might actually be the guy who first exposed himself to me in 1978,” one supposes [[Mr. Ross! Are you trying to seduce me?]]), but this time i was in

generation—you'd figure it must have been crafted by some real songwriter back in the 60's or late 70's or so. “Radiobeat” is not on my jukebox because it's got a small hole, and only the big hole is cool. AND HOW IT RELATES TO MY PENIS: Well, if my penis was named “radio,” you'd know where the hell it was! Moving right along, i countered

first person in town to pay money for this stupid album, and one of the only people not to get the band's one good song, ta boot! Fuck you, Adam Ant! Your horizontal nose stripe pales in comparison to the daring Rock Accoutrements of REAL men, like M&M suits and Antler Helmets and shit! AND HOW IT RELATES TO MY PENIS: I dunno, i doubt

It's like if you took whatever process makes the pink stuff in the middle of 3 Musketeers® candy bars fluffy, and reversed it, THAT'S this record.

the front seat of the family's 1977 Buick® LeSabre, heading up to Family Night at Camp U-Nah-Li-Yah, which is where my kid brother used to get sent in the summer. THAT was another mind blower: “Ca Plane Pour Moi” sounded like a cross between the Ramones, “They're Coming to Take Me Away, Ha-Haaa!” by Napoleon XIV, and “Mah Na Mah Na” by Piero Umilani. It also sounded like it was sung in Martian. OK, sure, LATER we all found out the guy was singing in French, but, i mean, i took two years of high school French. The guy was singing in Martian. Even though i had only heard the song once in my life—and there was, of course, no way to decipher the song title and thusly request the song on the radio—the song stuck in my head for about two years afterwards, and i would occasionally sing what i remembered of it to myself when i was at the mall, making up nonsensical lyrics like “and Benini's got some nerve, take his hot rod to the curve,” which makes no sense ((but, then again, makes no less sense than the actual lyrics)), so, as you might imagine, i was pretty stoked when i found a one-dollar copy of the 45 two years later in 1980. “Ca Plane Pour Moi” is a little too well-known to be wasting your time with, so i opted for the flip—which has the same three chords, the same one BAM-BAM-BAM-BAM drumbeat, and the same Martian French vocals. I think the saxophone might hit a second note, however. “Pogo Pogo” holds down the F5 slot on my jukebox. AND HOW IT RELATES TO MY PENIS: ooo-OOO-ooo-OOO, he gives me head! I followed up this blast of wacky geniusness with “Radiobeat” by unctuous legends the DEVIL DOGS, which is not only their best song ever, but also, along with the aforementioned Teengenerate ep, one of the best seven-inch records of the 90's. “Radiobeat” is to the Devil Dogs what “I Wanna Be Sedated” is to the Ramones—their masterpiece: Their first and best truly outstanding song that transcends their original outstanding formula of formulaic outstandingness—the song after which the band's true greatness is forever cemented, and the song after which anything worthwhile the band does is mere gravy. “Radiobeat” is one of those songs that is so masterful and catchy that, upon initial contact, one wouldn't imagine that such a good song could have been written by anyone of any manner of modern

the greasy east coast charms of the Devil Dogs with the damp, thrift-happy acumen of the ANGRY SAMOANS “I'd Rather Do The Dog With Dorothy Stratten.” Debate all you want upon the matter of whether Mike + Bill + Whomever really truly = The Angry Samoans, but this lilting little ditty ((backed with the similarly excellent “Letter From Uncle Sam,” plus a value-infused medley of the A and B-side)) is actually my favorite Angry Samoans record of all time, which is a pretty zany thing to say when ya stop to consider how great the “Inside My Brain” ep was. This addlepated doozy sits at the all-important E3 spot on the juke. AND HOW IT RELATES TO MY PENIS: How DOESN'T doing the dog with Dorothy Stratten relate to my penis? ((Dorothy Stratten was a Playboy magazine centerfold from Wisconsin who wound up getting murdered or something. I went to Wikipedia to look up more details, but my computer crashed and i lost about a page worth of unsaved work, so google her yourself if'n you've got the notion)). I then kicked shit up a notch with “Johnny Won't Get To Heaven” by the KILLJOYS because i felt bad about not knowing whom the fuck they were until they were covered by the Armitage Shanks on that “The Armitage Shanks Sing and Play 20 Punk Rock Greats” album. AND HOW IT RELATES TO MY PENIS: Actually, both the part about being a Killjoy and the part about not getting to Heaven are probably equally valid. This segued into the rather inexcusable choice of “Beat My Guest” by ADAM & THE ANTS, a song which has always bothered me because i was the first person in Green Bay to buy the “Kings of the Wild Frontier” album, and it suuuuuuuuuuuuuuuucked with more u's than a Chinese phone book would have if everyone in China had the surname “Husker Du” ((i was able to move quickly and foist the wretched thing off on my guitar player, Gary, who dopily swapped me “Too Much Too Soon” by the New York Dolls for it, on the condition that i would carry his amp home for him after practice, ‘cause we were only fifteen and didn't have cars. I all-too-happily obliged)). A few months later, they started tossing in the “Stand & Deliver” 45, of which “Beat My Guest” is the b-side, as a freebie with the album—so, somehow, as the butt of some grand cosmic butt-jest, i wound up being the

it's a coincidence that two of the six songs i've mentioned have “beat” in the title... i countered my own festering unpunkness with one of the punkest records, in the safety pin sense of the word, of the last fifteen years or so ((much to Todd's bemusement)), “Throw It Away” by the SPENT IDOLS. Say what thou wilt about these be-spiked anachronisms, but the fact that this band can out-dopey Blanks 77 and out-77 Blanks 77 is a thing of sheerest beauty. Meaningless lyrics like “Repeat this line! One more time!” will transport you to the blissful, punk rock chainsaw nirvana of the first three-sevenths of the first side of the first Ramones album—it's one of those punk songs that's so perfect you can't understand how nobody wrote it before. AND HOW IT RELATES TO MY PENIS: Sometimes i think it's about condom wrappers. Other times i think it's about my penis itself. I countered this blast of spiky pogo miscreantism with the EPOXIES cover of “Clones (We're All)” by Alice Cooper. I've always thought Alice Cooper was kind of a pud. I mean, it's like, “Ooooh, Alice! Those stagehands dressed in executioners' hoods have just put you in a straightjacket! You're in a real pickle, all right! How ever will you extricate yourself from THIS sticky wicket?” I mean, some of his music over the years was kinda good, i guess, but most of it was pretty f'n boring. I didn't really know what to make of it when, in 1980, Alice cut his hair and released a “new wave” ((cough)) album. I couldn't tell if he was winning or we were winning. Considering that he quickly grew his hair out, drew all over his face with Mr Sketch™ scented markers again, and started doing the same old hokey “BEWARE MY AMAZING SCARINESS!” routine almost immediately thereafter, i'd say we won, just because he's probably still trying to live down his short-lived new waver phase when he's out golfing with his accountant and Gene Simmons and shit. Still, “Flush The Fashion” remains the only Alice Cooper album worth listening to all the way through, so the final verdict as to whom exactly the Alice-went-New-Wave joke was and is on is still a matter of some debate. AND HOW IT RELATES TO MY PENIS: Parentheses kind of give me a boner. We then turn our attention to “Prisoners” by the VAPORS. I HAVE NEVER STOPPED SALUTING THE THIN-



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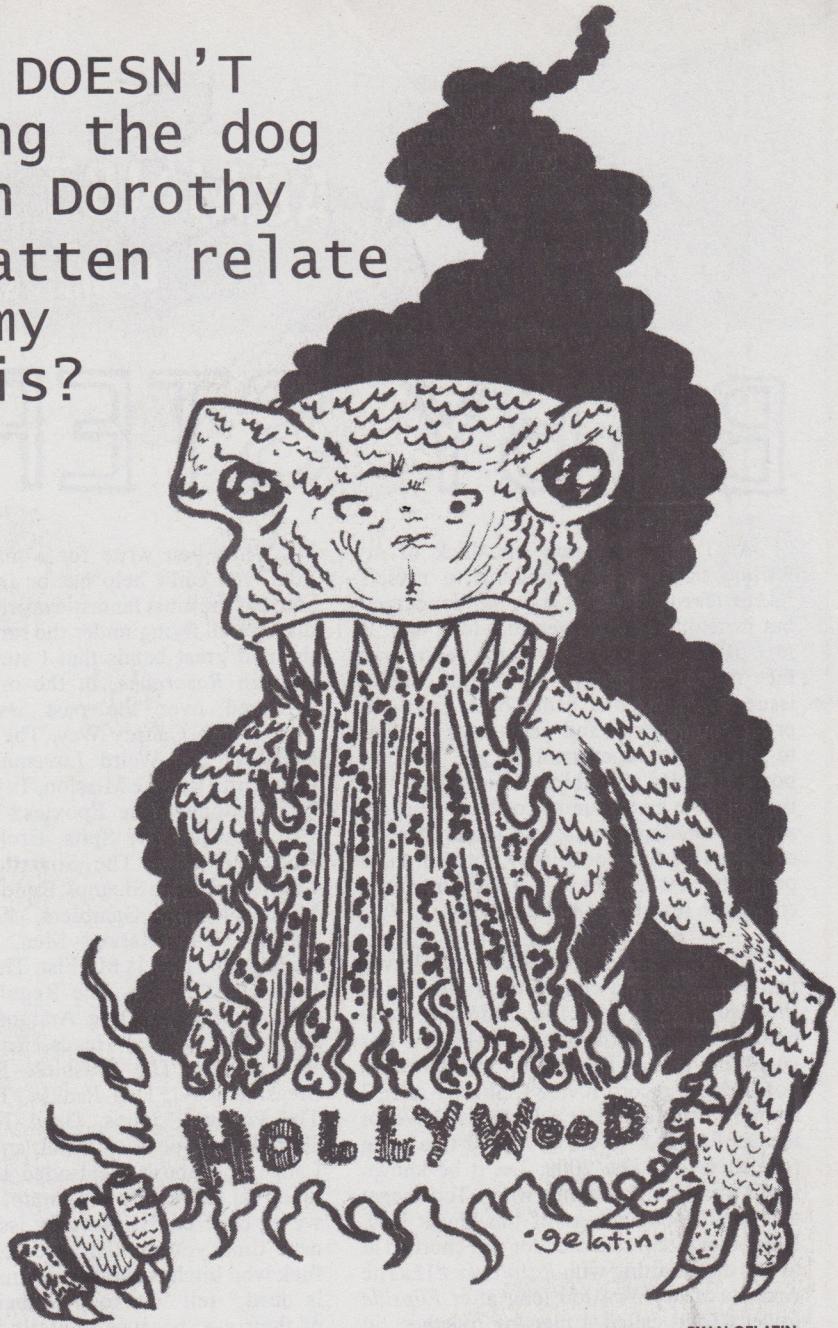
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LIPPED MAJESTY OF THIS OUTFIT'S NEW WAVE MULLETS, AND, COME HELL OR HIGH AQUA NET®, I REMAIN STEADFASTLY DETERMINED TO DO SO! "Prisoners" is probably the second best song on the "New Clear Days" album ((behind only the ultra-obvious "News At Ten"—"Turning Japanese" being only about #3 or #4 by my count)); my long-running Vapors evangelism thus trumped my desire to be a hipster and play the non-LP B-side, "Sunstroke," instead. The picture sleeve has cool orange stripes on it. Yup. *AND HOW IT RELATES TO MY PENIS: I Yam bangeeng my tin cup against the iron bars of my feethy cell for YOU, my little lotus blossom!!!* Next up was "Your Disciple" by BUM, a mid-90's Canadian pop-punk ode of such riveting power that i actually told anyone who'd bother to listen that if they bought a copy of the 45 on my say-so, and didn't like it, i'd personally give them their money back. *AND HOW IT RELATES TO MY PENIS:* Are you kidding? My penis loves the Bum! This was astutely followed up by some classic late 70's punk/wave, with "Disgracing The Family Name" by SKAFISH. Jim Skafish always seemed like an insufferable dork to me—i mean, there are more pictures of his pathologically hunkerin' schnozz on his record covers than there are of his bandmates—but i've always really loved this song. When i was fourteen, i had just discovered college radio ((ten years later i would be removed, by armed security guards, from the control room of the same station)), and WGBW's Saturday night DJ, Doc Rock, was kind of a hero amongst the Washington Junior High School punk set ((all three of us)). One weekend, he came back from Chicago with a pile of records that were even badder-ass than the usual stuff he played, and this was one of them. He kinda sounds like a new wavey cross between Tempole Tudor and Johnny Rotten, but from Indiana, and with a big nose ((has he mentioned the fact that he has a big nose yet?)) I've always wanted to play this 45 ((which is slightly different than the album version on I.R.S.)) on the air so i could harness my inner Doc Rock, so i did. *AND HOW IT RELATES TO MY PENIS:* Well, i've disgraced a family name or two in my day...and you know what they say about guys with big noses ((something about big nostrils, i reckon)). "Candygirl" by CANDYGIRL needs no explanation, except for the part about why they mentioned about sixteen kinds of candy in this song, and none of them were SweeTarts®. My only regret is that this was played from a 45, and not from a hypothetical self-titled album, because then i could have announced the song as "'Candygirl' off of 'Candygirl' by Candygirl," like i always wanted to do with the first song off the first Bo Diddley album ((which was, of course, "Bo Diddley" by Bo Diddley off of "Bo Diddley")). *AND HOW IT RELATES TO MY PENIS:* Well, you can take the Girl out of the Candy, but you can't always take the Candy out of the Girl, or something. I concluded matters with two older songs, the first of which was "That's The Way a Woman Is" by the MESSENGERS, which i have fond memories

How DOESN'T doing the dog with Dorothy Stratten relate to my penis?



RYAN GELATIN

of hearing being played twice an hour on the radio in my parents' kitchen whilst i fried my brains out with Testors® model glue putting together Big Daddy Roth™ models i had purchased with loot from my seventh birthday. This record was occupying the Q1 slot on the jukebox when i bought it, and it remains there to this day. *AND HOW IT RELATES TO MY PENIS:* It's been covered by a few Asian girl groups. Whooping things up to a frenzitoidal hemoglobin throat-stomp, matters were brought to a thundering, plundering, bison-with-mad-cow-disease climax with "The Girl Can't Dance" by BUNKER HILL, pretty much the rootinest, tootinest, shootinest slab of abounding mound-pounding sound, since, like, forever or something. Backed by Link Wray, The Bunk resides in my jukebox's P6 slot, and remains, to my mind, the ultimate antithesis of the Metric System. *AND HOW IT RELATES TO MY PENIS: Hi-YO! Hi-yo Silver look away!* As my forty minutes of

fame expired, the trusty *Razorcake* microphone spitscreens were drooling with radioactive columnist saliva. My records, having bolted from their sleeves, were bounding all over the room, while cans of Pabst®, both full and empty, fell all over themselves in an attempt to thwart our equilibrium and foment further chaos. The spinning of the RAWK had left us similarly spun and utterly spent, with partial brain damage to boot. We were drunk, drooling, and starving, with guests and pizza beginning to traipse into *Razorcake* HQ. The sun had left the sky, and the room appeared to be spinning counter-clockwise at 45 RPM. It was time to quit. Thus chastened, we did the only thing our innate sense of duty told us was appropriate: We recorded another podcast. This time about Daryl's penis.

Love,
Norb



"It was on like fucking Donkey Kong."

BABY STEPS

As I'm getting into the thick of my writing here, I keep thinking to myself, "Man, it really doesn't seem that long ago," but in reality, it has been that long ago. In fact, it's been more than eight years since the first (and only) newsprint-covered issue of *Razorcake* came back from the printing company, and got hauled upstairs to Todd's old apartment to get bundled, boxed, labeled and shipped out. Since that first issue, a great number of bands, artists, authors, photographers, and scads of other creative folk have been duly noted in these pages that a whole lot of you have been kind enough to read for some time now.

I first got introduced to *Razorcake* by our fearless leader and editor, Mr. Todd Taylor. We'd struck up a good friendship during my tenure over at *Flipside* fanzine, where he was co-editing at the time and got me started on board doing record reviews. Shortly after, I started writing a regular column, as I have for the last four or five years, *Flipside* was being published until late 2000. Let it be known that it was around this time where Todd begat the humble beginnings of the "Fuck You, Dale" that is still searched for and chortled at to this day (starting with *Razorcake* #12, The Arrivals issue). Not too long after *Flipside* folded, Todd called a meeting together in early 2001 at Canter's Deli in L.A. with me and a few other ex-*Flipsiders*, along with a group of other people to talk about a new zine endeavor called *Razorcake*, complete with a handout of what it was going to entail. I quickly found out that I was going to have a crack at my own column again, as well as having the freedom to conduct interviews and write record/book/DVD reviews. It was on like fucking Donkey Kong.

I'm rather proud to say that I've been able to contribute a column for every single issue of *Razorcake*, as well as interview one of my oldest pals since the third grade, Mr. Art Fuentes, cartoonist supreme (who's been contributing some funny-ass comics to *Razorcake* for a long while now). I've even gotten to interview a couple of real ass-kicking bands, too, like Blazing Haley and Hollywood Hate, not to mention this earth's current, all-reigning king of rock, Mr. Lemmy Kilmister.

When you write for a magazine like ours, you can't help but be introduced to some of the most fantastic music that's been discovered flying under the radar. Some of the real great bands that I stumbled upon through *Razorcake*, in the order they've appeared over the past issues: Selby Tigers, The Causey Way, The Pinkz, The Beautys, The Weird Lovemakers, Super Chinchilla Rescue Mission, Toys That Kill, The Beltones, The Epoxies, The Jewws, The Arrivals, The Spits, Broken Bottles, Knockout Pills, The Soviets, Grabass Charlestons, The Shemps, Randy, Riverboat Motherfucking Gamblers, Spontaneous Disgust, The Marked Men, The Ergs!, Smalltown, This Is My Fist, The Checkers, Bent Outta Shape, The Regulations, The Bananas, Swing Ding Amigos, Off With Their Goddamned Heads, Young People With Faces, The Trashies, Radon, The Measure [SA], Dan Padilla, Tranzmitors, The Potential Johns, Dead To Me, The God Damn Doo Wop Band, and Shang-A-Lang. The above-mentioned bands make up a real teeny-tiny list, compared to what we've covered the last fifty issues. So the next time you run into some grumbling fuck who bitches and complains that "punk is dead," tell 'em to pull their head out of their ass, because they obviously ain't lookin' hard enough.

Besides checking out some über-rocking bands through *Razorcake*, I've had the pleasure of discovering and corresponding with some really great (and entertainingly funny) artists such as Kiyoshi Nakazawa, Mitch Clem, Ben Snakepit, Steve Larder, and Rob Ruelas (Quiet, Art. I already mentioned your ass earlier). These guys have all done some top notch illustrative work and some of 'em continue to make me laugh out loud.

There are some staffers here that I've actually known for quite a long time, even before *Razorcake* was a twinkle in Todd and Sean Carswell's eye. (Sean's the guy who moved from Florida to California to start *Razorcake* with Todd.) Gary Hornberger (my good friend I've known since we were kids), Jimmy Alvarado, Donofthedead, Jim Ruland, and Matt Average—all five of these down motherfuckers were my partners in musical crime years prior at *Flipside*. Sean

Carswell has become one of my favorite buddies to shoot the shit with (when I do see or call him!), as well as one Kat Jetson, my Ramones, Phil Spector, and all great things that are Rodney Bingenheimer homegirl. Other honorable mentions must be given to Skinny Dan, The Rhythm Chicken, Megan Pants, Toby Tober, Ty Stranglehold, Jenny Moncayo, Chris and Brandy, Chris Devlin, Dave Guthrie, Mike Plante, and good ol' Daryl Gussin, sensei of our podcasts and who probably keeps Todd from putting his head through a wall on a daily basis at *Razorcake* HQ.

For those staffers who live around here in the greater L.A. area, it was always a good excuse and guaranteed good time to get together and hang out at Todd's old apartment/former *Razorcake* HQ, inserting the subscription cards by hand into each and every new issue that came back from the printer. (Man, remember that shit? Don and I on the prowl for issues with the oddball covers...heh.) Jokes of all colors were exchanged (usually at the expense of others sitting around), records were spun, and pizza, soda, 'n beers were the norm to get the job done, with blackened, hobo-like fingers as an end result from the printer's ink. I miss that sometimes, as it was a convenient way to catch up with those you really didn't get to see too often, besides at the occasional show.

One memorable time that sticks out was in 2004 at the annual Punk Rock Bowling Tournament out in Las Vegas. *Razorcake* had three or four teams bowling that year and the team I bowled on finished second overall. Our team consisted of Jim Ruland, Art Fuentes, Mike Plante, and myself. To this day, I still don't know how we managed to seep between the cracks of all the ringer teams who place high every year, but we did pretty damn well. Also not-so-surprisingly entertaining was Team Tiltwheel discovering new and hysterical ways to make sure that they finish dead last (a tradition they themselves started), including part of a sit-down video game from the bowling alley arcade getting hurled down their lane. That alone (amongst their other assorted, fun-time hijinks) was the icing on our second place trophy cake. What a weekend.



DANNY MARTIN

Without sounding like I'm polishing my own dick, I'd like to say that the people who put this magazine together and/or contribute to it do so because they honestly know what they're talking about when it comes to delving into the different underground scenes and communities. No matter what the medium of art that's discussed within these pages, the people discussing it have been personally involved in it one degree or another over the past years as steadfast fans, actual participants, or in some cases, both. This isn't an opinion, it's a fact, as anyone who's taken the time to read an issue of *Razorcake* from front to back can tell you, and that's always a good thing to come to expect when you pick up our magazine. We're proud of that. Shit, I know I am.

I think a large part to what's kept *Razorcake* going strong for eight

Without sounding too much like a filthy hippie,

karma can be a wonderful thing,

or it can be a stone bitch.

consecutive years (and we've never missed putting an issue out, ever) is the solid, carefully thought-through baby steps. Don't confuse careful with paranoid here. There's a world of difference. This mag has never lived beyond its means and has always paid its bills on time, which is why a lot of smaller publications and labels can (and will, unfortunately) get themselves neck-deep into some serious financial feces. Besides the baby steps, I think another important part to our ever-growing, ongoing longevity is/has been the personal, one-on-one type of association we've established with a lot of the bands, artists, authors, photographers, and scads of other creative folk I spoke of in the beginning, not to mention the numerous labels and publishers we work with, too. Without sounding too much like a filthy hippie, karma can be a wonderful thing,

or it can be a stone bitch. Funny thing is, I can't remember the last time a stone bitch has come back to bite *Razorcake* in the ass, unless you count getting officially approved for non-profit status, upgrading operations into a house, or successfully adding a book publishing company and record label to the already-existing magazine a stone bitch. It's like the old adage goes: you get what you give. More people should keep that in mind.

A huge, sincere *thank you* to everyone for the last eight years.

Here's to seeing you at issue #100... and beyond!

—Designated Dale
designateddale@yahoo.com

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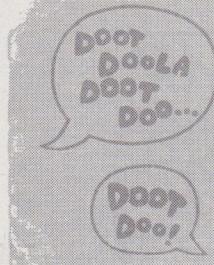
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CONGRATS ON RAZORCAKE'S 50th ISSUE! YOU ARE AS BEAUTIFUL TO ME NOW AS WHEN I SAW YOUR FIRST ISSUE.

4/1/09

RAZORCAKE 25



WHO ARE YOU?

Nardwuar The Human Serviette vs. Sean Carswell

Nardwuar: Who are you?

Carswell: I'm Sean Carswell. I'm a co-founder of *Razorcake* magazine, and I'm a writer of some books.

Nardwuar: *Razorcake* fanzine, and what is *Razorcake* fanzine?

Carswell: Uh, well it's mostly a punk rock magazine out of Los Angeles. We do branch out a little further than just punk rock and occasionally have articles on politics or other forms of independent culture.

Nardwuar: And you are now up to fifty issues strong.

Carswell: Mmmhmm.

Nardwuar: Congratulations.

Carswell: Thanks.

Nardwuar: So you've made it up to fifty issues, but how did *Razorcake* end up on *Conan O'Brien*?

Carswell: You know what, this is news to me. We were on *Conan O'Brien*?

Nardwuar: You were on the *Conan O'Brien* show, via the band Guttermouth. They wore a *Razorcake* T-shirt on the *Conan O'Brien* show.

Carswell: Okay, well then I can figure out how we got on *Conan O'Brien*.

Nardwuar: Congratulations. How long has *Razorcake* been going? What's its actual start date?

Carswell: Todd and I first started working on *Razorcake* in January 2001. I moved out to L.A., maybe the eighth of January, somewhere around there. And we got started right away. Our first issue came out in March of 2001.

Nardwuar: And where else have you seen *Razorcake* end up?

Carswell: A friend of mine was watching a movie the other day called *Thumbsucker*. And he told me that he was looking at the thank-yous in the credits and they thanked *Razorcake* for some reason. That was awfully odd to me. But I have no idea why they thanked us. I've seen 'em turn up some weird places. One of the funniest places that it turned up, at least for me, is where I was doing a job interview. I work at a university down here (Camarillo, California). I interviewed for the job, and I got done and I felt like "Oh good, I think I'm gonna get this job." And at the end, the university panel said to me "We're happy to see that you like both punk and rock music." And I realized that they had

gotten that off of the *Razorcake* bio page of me. And I thought "Oh, crap. I'm not gonna get this job." But I ended up getting it anyway. They had picked up an issue of *Razorcake*, checked it out, and actually liked it.

Nardwuar: Sean, of *Razorcake*, what is really, really cool, is that *Razorcake* teaches me stuff. Like you taught me about Emma Goldman. I did not know about Emma Goldman until I read about her in *Razorcake*!

Carswell: Oh, cool.

Nardwuar: Did many other people have a cultural awakening to Emma Goldman?

Carswell: You know, I think a lot of people did. I was pretty excited to do that. Todd and I had interviewed Howard Zinn a few years earlier and I asked him a question about Emma Goldman and he said to me, "You know, the real source on Emma Goldman is this woman in Berkeley. Her name is Candice Faulk." And I thought, "Oh, I have to go up and talk to her." And the only excuse I could come up with to go up and talk to her about Emma Goldman to check out the archives was to do an article for *Razorcake*. But then, yeah, afterwards, a lot of people told me that they had picked up Emma Goldman's autobiography and got really into it. And I'm glad to hear that.

Nardwuar: Sean Carswell from *Razorcake* fanzine, celebrating fifty issues, congratulations again. I just keep saying it over and over again. But, that's pretty amazing, isn't it? To make the fifty issues, like six issues a year, all the while you go back to 2001? That's pretty amazing to make it that long, isn't it? I say the word amazing over and over, but in this day and age, it is amazing to stay in the print industry.

Carswell: Yeah, it's tough.

Nardwuar: You originally came from Florida, right?

Carswell: Yes, I did.

Nardwuar: Now my friend, Dave Carswell, no relation, you're Sean Carswell, had Topper Headon of the Clash's dad as headmaster when he went to school in Dover, England. Now you, Sean Carswell, who did you have as a teacher when you were in Florida? Anybody like that, or connected to rock'n'roll?

Carswell: No, not that I can think of.

Nardwuar: So, how did you get into punk if it wasn't your headmaster? Isn't that pretty

"The university panel said to me 'We're happy to see that you like both punk and rock music.'"

Sean Carswell

cool, having Topper Headon of the Clash's dad as your headmaster?

Carswell: Yes, that would be very cool.

Nardwuar: So, he got my buddy into punk—well, I'm not sure if he did get him into punk or not. But, how did you get into punk? How did you get into this mess?

Carswell: You know, just kind of gradually. A lot of times people will talk about, you know, that one moment when they knew they were into punk. But, yeah, I remember being a kid and hearing some Dead Kennedys stuff. And I guess the one album that was really seminal to me was a friend of mine in high school went up to D.C. to visit his dad and he came back with a Minor Threat album. And he played—it was at this point the *Complete Discography*—it just blew my mind. And so it wasn't a scene in my high school. It was very unknown. I mean, growing up in a small town in Florida in the '80s, it just wasn't there. And so I think it was stuff like the Dead Kennedys, which was pretty easy to get a hold of, or Minor Threat, which when I first heard that, I knew I had to take a different path in life.

Nardwuar: Who were the local bands in your area growing up and as you got older? What about the Scooby-Doo's, or Discount, from Vero Beach? Scooby-Doo's being from Melbourne, Florida.

Carswell: Those were after I was growing up. I'm a little older than that. I was actually out of grad school and back home living in Florida when Discount started playing around.

Nardwuar: Did you ever go to the old School House in Vero Beach?

Carswell: I did. Yeah, yeah. I saw Discount... Wait, the old School House? No, no. I went to a community center and saw Discount and Less Than Jake in Vero Beach.

Nardwuar: It is interesting how Discount just kind of ended up, eh, with Alison in a band The Kills?

Carswell: Yeah, yeah. It's kind of funny.

Nardwuar: Have you seen The Kills?

Carswell: I have not, no.

Nardwuar: So you don't usually progress beyond the first band you like. Because I saw you saying something about, to the effect of, Dave from Scared of Chaka, what band did he go on to?



MITCH CLEM

Nardwuar: How hard is it to build a house? And have you considered building another house?

Carswell: I got rid of all my tools just to make sure that I would no longer work construction again.

Carswell: Some other band, I heard.

Nardwuar: The Shins! So he went on to The Shins. So, you ignored The Shins, you ignored The Kills. You only like the first generation, right?

Carswell: No, that's not true. You know, I mean I'm equally a fan of Thee Goblins and The Evaporators.

Nardwuar: Ba-Boom! But they exist in the same parallel universe. How about in Florida, did you ever run into Nazi skins at all in Palm Bay? What was the Nazi skinhead problem like there?

Carswell: Uh, yeah. I did. I went to a show one time in Palm Bay.

Nardwuar: Was it the New Bomb Turks and The Donnas?

Carswell: No, I don't think it was.

Nardwuar: Okay.

Carswell: I don't remember what this show was, but this is going back probably '91, somewhere around there. And I was with a

buddy of mine and he was the only black guy at this show and that caused some problems. And one of the skinheads went to jump me instead of my buddy and I swung a bottle at him and then he backed down. But I didn't actually hit him. He managed to dodge it. So, yeah, I almost got in a fight with some Nazi skins in Palm Bay.

Nardwuar: That sounds pretty terrifying, and you say it so calmly, Sean. Have you always been so calm?

Carswell: It was eighteen years ago, Nardwuar. It's easy to be calm about things that happened eighteen years ago.

Nardwuar: Sean Carswell, from *Razorcake* fanzine, early days of *Razorcake*. Really early days of *Razorcake*, you met Todd Taylor from *Razorcake* in Arizona. What did he look like? What did you look like? What attracted you to him? What attracted him to you?

Carswell: I don't know. We were in school together at Northern Arizona University. And you know how it is, you can kind of look around

a group of people and tell by how they're dressed and that kind of thing whether they're into the same things you are. And Todd looked very much like a punk rocker. And so I kind of knew, "Alright, here's someone I can talk to about music. Here's someone I can listen to music with." And we just had a lot in common.

Nardwuar: Does Todd still look like a punk rocker?

Carswell: Sorta yeah, sorta no. I think he's still wearing the same clothes that he was wearing when I met him about fifteen years ago. The same exact clothes, not the same kind of clothes. And outside of that, sort of yes, sort of no.

Nardwuar: Sean Carswell, you met Todd Taylor in Arizona. What has Todd dragged you into? Did he drag you into *Flipside* before he dragged you into *Razorcake*?

Carswell: Sorta, yeah. I asked to be in *Flipside* when he started working there. I asked if I could do reviews, and he said yes.

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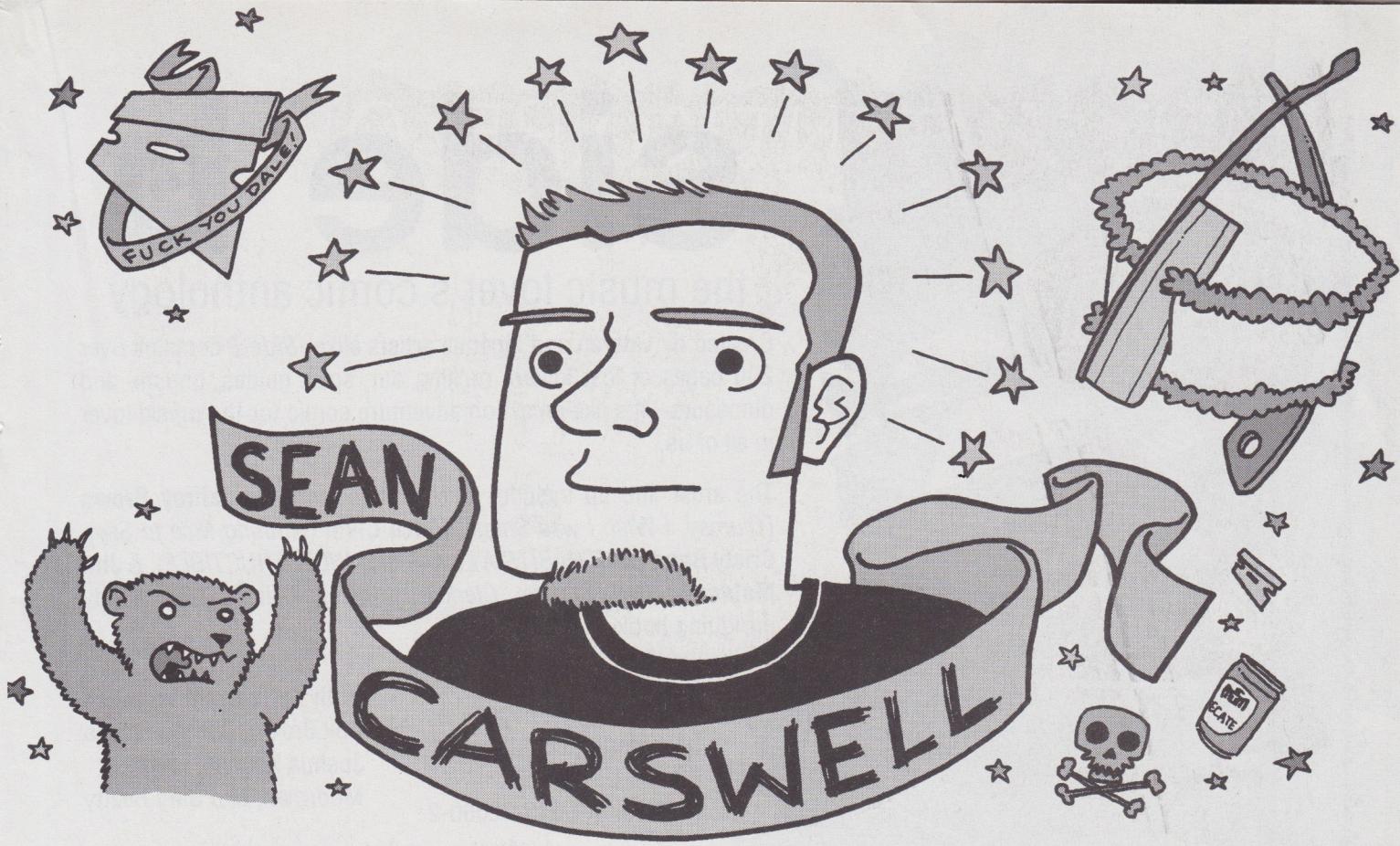
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MITCH CLEM

Nardwuar: And then Todd convinced you to build a house and then sell it and take the profits and start *Razorcake*.

Carswell: Sort of.

Nardwuar: The house that built *Razorcake*. Usually it happens the other way around, right? You have like a big magazine, you make all this money, and then you sell the house or whatever and everybody's mad that you sold the house and you didn't give any money to all the contributors or something. But, here you built a house first, sold it, and then took the money and started the mag. That's incredible. How did all that come about?

Carswell: Well, I was working construction. I was working as a site supervisor, and I had built a certain model house a couple times for my boss and he sold it for pretty good money. So, I just built the same house in the same neighborhood myself. I got a loan and built it. And then I made a pretty good profit on it, so I quit my job and moved out to L.A. and took the money that I made as a profit so that I could live off of it for the first year.

Nardwuar: How long did it take to build a house? And how hard is it to build a house? And have you considered building another house?

Carswell: It took me about three months to build that house. But I grew up working construction. My boss—I said my boss, but it was really my dad—so, you know, I was always working either for him or for different crews that I knew through him. And so building a house wasn't that tough. But, I left Florida. I got rid of all my tools just to make sure that I would no longer work construction again. And I have not since.

Nardwuar: Where is *Razorcake* located now, and is there a *Razorcake* house? And how well is it constructed?

Carswell: There is a *Razorcake* house. Todd Taylor lives upstairs and then downstairs is *Razorcake*. And, it's pretty well constructed. It's a good house.

Nardwuar: *Razorcake* is definitely not driven by your advertising. Because it's only two hundred dollars for a full-page ad in *Razorcake*?

Carswell: Yeah, Yeah. It's pretty cheap. *Razorcake* is one of the few magazines that exists largely on newsstand sales and things like that as well.

Nardwuar: How has the post office affected *Razorcake*?

Carswell: Oh, the Post Office in the United States has gotten really dirty in the last few years, with gas prices going up and all that. And one of the ways that they generated revenue is by restructuring their cost system. Apparently, lobbyists from AOL/Time Warner restructured how you can send certain items. And they restructured it basically so it would benefit them. So it used to be so we could send a lot of stuff media mail, a program going back all the way to Thomas Jefferson, which states that in an effort to support a free media, you should have a discounted mailing rate for magazines or periodicals, more or less. And so they jacked up their rate of media mail. They raised it by about 75% more.

Nardwuar: And you've quite a few copies to go out. You print up about 6,000 copies of *Razorcake*, but you mail out about 1,000?

Carswell: We mail out almost all of them, because you mail them to distributors and things like that. We mail out 1,000 directly

to people and we mail out the other 5,000 to distributors and that kind of thing.

Nardwuar: 1,000 subscribers.

Carswell: Right, right.

Nardwuar: Why are there no live reviews or letters in *Razorcake*?

Carswell: There are no live reviews because they get dated so quickly.

Nardwuar: But what about people like me, who live far away, where it doesn't seem dated, where they're just happy to read about a band that they'll never see?

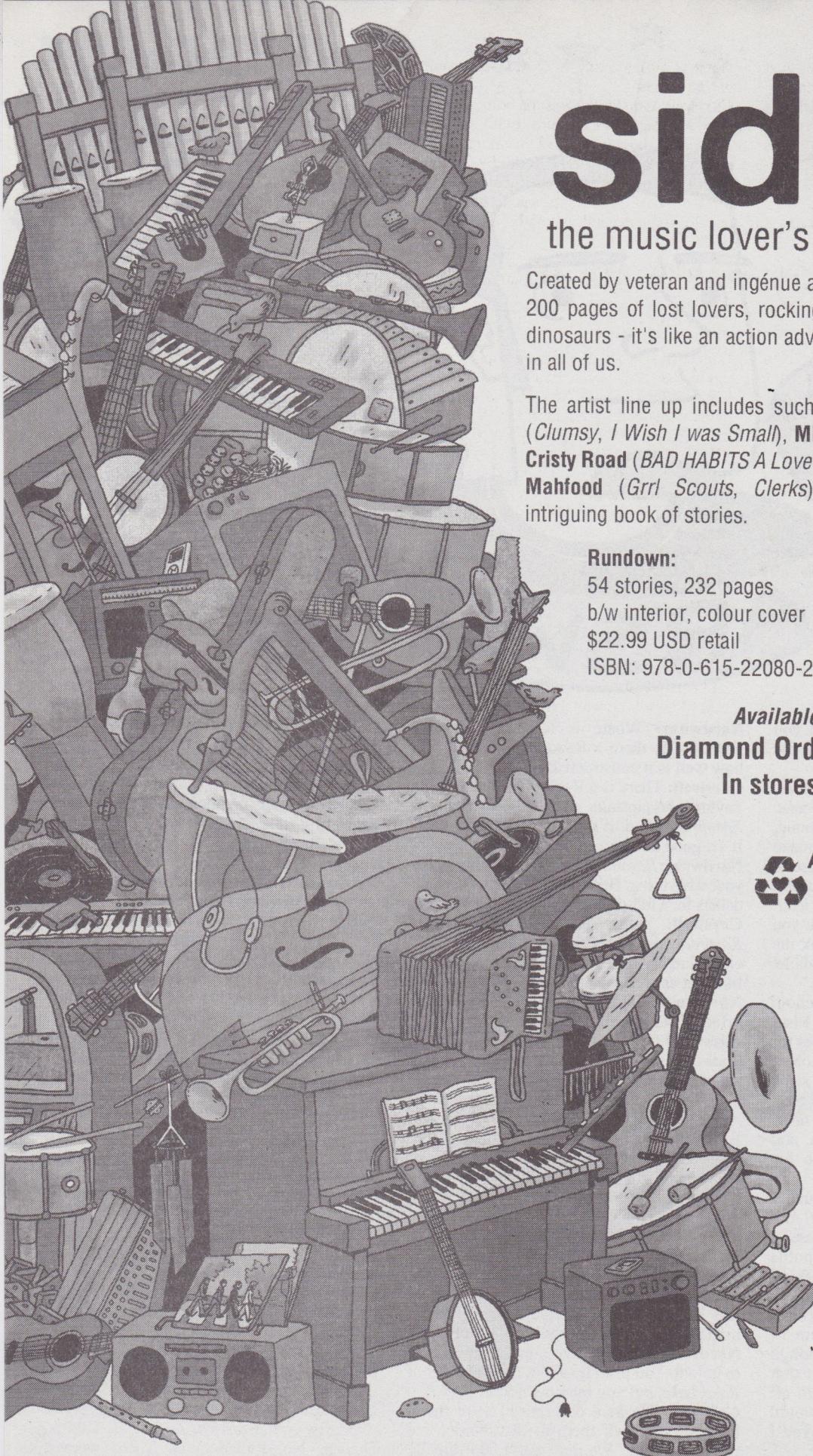
Carswell: Well, we have it on the website. You can always go on the website and read it.

Nardwuar: But isn't that kind of a copout? You want it in the print.

Carswell: Well, maybe it is. And as far as the letters section goes, Todd and I talked about that a lot. And, basically, we said, you know, if we're doing the work, if we're controlling the content, we want to have writers we respect and who we choose and we want to fill up content with our writers, not with just anyone who's got an opinion.

Nardwuar: Who were your contemporaries when you started out with *Razorcake* in 2001? What were some other magazines that were around at the same time? What was the zine scene like then?

Carswell: Well, *Punk Planet* was still around then. And they were doing pretty well. And there was *Clamor* magazine, which wasn't exactly directly punk rock, but it was kinda punk rock politics. That was a pretty cool one. And there was *Verbicide* out of New England. That one was published pretty regularly. And *Wonkavision* out of, I think, Denver. No, Philadelphia. There were a



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bunch. And I think of all of those that I just listed, only *Wonkavision* is still publishing.

Nardwuar: What was the reason for the decline of all this? Was it something to do with distribution? Was the closing of Tower Records really, really sucky? Was Tower cool?

Carswell: All my experiences with Tower Records, the people who worked there, were great. I know it was a chain store, and I know

What is Gorsky, and how did you come up with that name?

Carswell: Gorsky Press is the book publishing arm of *Razorcake*. We're putting out our eighteenth book in about a month. That's how we published *Grrrl*, Todd Taylor's *Born to Rock*, Jim Ruland's *Big Lonesome*, and a lot of those books. The name comes from an old urban legend about the Space Center.

and killed all the projects. But they were too far along and under contract with *Strange Toys*. So, he eventually led to a blacklisting of Pat's stuff. My wife was a big fan of Pat's work, so now I am too. When we were doing Gorsky, one of the people who we wanted to try to publish again was Pat. She hadn't published anything in fifteen years. We convinced her to let us put a few of her books out.

Carswell: Yes, my books are just like Ron Jeremy's penis.

their music was iffy, but they had big racks of zines. They were a big supporter of the zine community. Yeah, I'm sorry to see them go.

Nardwuar: How many *Razorcakes* would they have taken if they were still around, or did they take?

Carswell: They took a lot. I don't remember the exact amount, but when they closed, that was about 1,000 *Razorcakes* that we were no longer selling of each issue. They took a lot. There have been other distribution companies that went under that have really hurt the zine community. There was Desert Moon, which was a supposedly independent zine distributor. They carried a lot of zines and they went under. Big Top Distributor was another big one out of San Francisco, and they went under too. I think Big Top closing was probably a big part of the death or fall of *Punk Planet*.

Nardwuar: With some knowledge out there of *Razorcake* in the general world, do you think that *Hustler* magazine might have been seriously interested in buying *Razorcake*?

Carswell: Have they offered?

Nardwuar: I heard that Megan was approached by *Hustler* magazine.

Carswell: That could be the case. She didn't tell me about it if that happened.

Nardwuar: I think they said something like "cool mag" to her. I don't think that they wanted to buy it or anything like that. But still, have you been approached by anyone like *Hustler* magazine wanting to buy *Razorcake*?

Carswell: I know that *Hustler* thought that we were cool, and I know that *Hustler* tried to buy *Barracuda* magazine, which was one of our contemporaries when we started and aren't publishing anymore. But I think that they just wanted to get Jeff Fox, the editor, to work for them—one way or the other. But, no, no one has really approached me to buy it.

Nardwuar: What about your writings, Sean? You've done quite a few writings out there. How many books have you written? How many short stories have you written? Do you write every day?

Carswell: That's a mess of questions. I've written two novels, and I have two short story collections out. I do write just about every day. I do something with my writing every day. A lot of times I'll be reading and revising or that type of thing. As far as short stories, I don't know; I've written hundreds of them—you know, published hundreds of them.

Nardwuar: When you publish 'em, a lot of them are published under the Gorsky name.

Supposedly, when Neil Armstrong went to the moon, one of his transmissions back to Mission Control was "Good luck, Mr. Gorsky." He never explained what that meant. Sometime in the '90s he came out and said that when he was a kid he lived next door to the Gorskys. He had hit a baseball under the Gorskys' window and when he went to get it, he heard Mr. Gorsky trying to convince Mrs. Gorsky to give him a blowjob. And she said, "Yeah, I'll do that when the boy next door lands on the moon." So, good luck Mr. Gorsky. That's the joke.

Nardwuar: Bah boom. And that really is documented?

Carswell: It's documented as not being true. But it's a real urban myth. I know a guy who worked out at the space center, and he swore he heard Neil Armstrong tell that story. But I don't know how true that is.

Nardwuar: Sean, when you do readings, you don't really do readings from your material: you do recitations, don't you? You memorize stuff.

Carswell: Yes, I do.

Nardwuar: How much do you have memorized? And do you need the book in front of you still to read it, like to look down at?

Carswell: I have a bunch of stories actually memorized—maybe seven or eight short stories or chapters from novels and things like that. I do carry the book with me, because I find that it makes people around me more comfortable. Then they can see that it's a reading and the thing that I'm talking about is actually in a book.

Nardwuar: So you think they might not believe you if you weren't holding the book. So, the book is a prop.

Carswell: The book is a prop, yes.

Nardwuar: Just like Ron Jeremy's penis.

Carswell: Yes, my books are just like Ron Jeremy's penis.

Nardwuar: Sean Carswell, you also published Patricia Geary on Gorsky. What can you tell the people about Patricia Geary? She had an interesting sort of experience with publishers, didn't she? Like she's an example of what can go wrong, right?

Carswell: Yeah, Patricia Geary was kind of a literary darling in the '80s. She had a couple of books that were best sellers, the second of which was *Strange Toys*, which won the Philip K. Dick award in 1987. The story is that when they were editing *Strange Toys*, her editor got in some kind of office confrontation with the boss. I guess they were all getting drunk one night and she locked them in a closet. When the boss came out of the closet, he fired everyone

Nardwuar: Lastly, here, Sean Carswell from *Razorcake* fanzine and Gorsky Press, will "Fuck you, Dale" ever end? What is "Fuck you, Dale" at *Razorcake* fanzine?

Carswell: I hope that never ends. Every issue of *Razorcake* magazine has a "Fuck you, Dale" written in there somewhere. And sometimes it's really well hidden. Megan actually did a record review one time where she formatted it so that the first letter in each line was capitalized, and if you look straight down that column, it says, "Fuck you, Dale." You know, different places. If you look around the magazine in every issue, hidden somewhere in there, like a *Where's Waldo?*, is a "Fuck you, Dale."

Nardwuar: What is the genesis of that? People might not be familiar with that, the *Razorcake*/"Fuck you, Dale" connection.

Carswell: It's just a way of saying fuck you to Designated Dale.

Nardwuar: He's one of your writers.

Carswell: He's one of our writers, yeah. It's obviously light-hearted because he keeps writing for us.

Nardwuar: Does he ask you where it is in the issue?

Carswell: He finds it. He hunts it down.

Nardwuar: Every single time?

Carswell: Yeah, I don't think that he's ever not found it. But the genesis is a lot of times he would kinda try to egg on Todd and egg him on, and you could see Todd just kinda clenching his jaw, getting frustrated at Dale kinda teasing him. Dale would say, "Go on, say it, Todd. Go on, say it." Then Todd would just say, "Fuck you, Dale." And then tensions would evaporate.

Nardwuar: Well, thanks so much for your time, Sean Carswell from *Razorcake* fanzine celebrating fifty issues since 2001 and still going strong. If people are interested in *Razorcake*, where can they get more information?

Carswell: www.razorcake.org

Nardwuar: And why should people care about *Razorcake*?

Carswell: Um, should they? 'Cause Nardwuar the Human Serviette is in every issue, and I think that's why they should care.

Nardwuar: That's probably less reason for them to care. Well, thanks so much, Sean Carswell from *Razorcake* fanzine. Keep on rockin' in the free, world and doot doola doot doo...

Carswell: Doot doot.

To hear and see this interview visit to
www.nardwuar.com



SQUEEZE MY HORN GARY HORNBERGER

"First impressions may be everything, but I just don't remember too much."

Commitments, V.D., and Milestones

If you are reading this, it means you have the 50th copy of this magazine firmly grasped in your hands. This means that we at the Razocake family are weathering the storm. It also means that I have in my garage more than fifty magazines and all the comics I've reviewed over the years, not excluding my time at *Flipside* and all those magazines. If I ever have a flood in the garage, I'm going to have some heavy pulp to remove, so pull up a barstool and I'll take you all on the Mr. Toad's Wild Ride of how I ended up here. As Youth Brigade sung, "We must jump back to find the life we once lead/ It cannot be dead/ We're men of a different time."

As a kid, my musical taste always ran to what others listened to: KISS in elementary school, Led Zep and Rush in high school. Only Cheap Trick still sticks to me. Then, in 1983, my friend Dave and I decided to take a chance on a cassette by The Vandals. That was all it took. This music was new, fast, and had all the freedom we wanted. Soon after, my record collection started growing with anything from the special bins at the local record shops. The great thing about punk and alternative music was that it was like getting a Wonka Bar: You knew you were getting chocolate but there was always the chance of getting a musical golden ticket.

I met Jeff Banks in college and he let me tag along to shows with his band Visual Discrimination. I went to shows at Fender's Ballroom in Long Beach and saw the likes of G.B.H. and Poison Idea. Then Jeff left V.D. and formed Chorus. I tagged along with them. They gave me album photo credits when they put together their first album, which I felt was pretty cool. This all lasted awhile, but as with all good things, the buzz wore off. People went off to school, got married, and had families. There really was no time for the music. There were times when Tim, Steve, and R.D., the rest of the Visual Discrimination guys would throw me a bone to see a V.D. show, but that was once or twice a year. My involvement in the scene was riding on empty.

So, at that point, I was just working away at the grocery store when I came across Designated Dale, who you all know because he works a few pages up or down from me, depending on the positioning that our editor gives us. (Dale was the guy I dumped all my KISS records and crap onto. For some unknown reason, he still laughs at me for it. That's my ink under his on the fan club member card!)

We got to talking. He was going to shows all the time. He was really into this band called The Humpers and he was in this band Cynical. The next thing I know, I was on Sunset Strip at the Coconut Teaszer taking pictures.

So here we go again; out every weekend, going to shows, but this time it's all over the place from Newport to Santa Barbara. This is when I started meeting people from the Flipside family. Dale introduced me to Marty McMartin, who was more than gracious with his time for the scene, putting together all-day shows and comp CDs that showcased new bands from across the country. I also met Ken The All Night Rocker, who I saw once roll into Zed's Records to drop off some flyers to Big Frank Harrison for a show he was doing. Ken may have had a disability, but that sonofabitch was a manipulator and that moved him miles in the scene. In a roundabout way, it also landed me my spot with *Razocake*.

Next up on the list was my first meeting at the Flipside office with the high muckity muck, King Todd. Dale had to drop stuff off and wanted to use the carpool lane, so I went with him. Besides, I probably got a meal at Doogie Burger out of it. So in we walked to this bedroom-sized second floor office across the street from Pasadena City College and my first impression was that it was an organizational roughhouse, but I'm sure Todd had a method to his madness. First impressions may be everything, but I just don't remember too much. I was a kid in a candy store. I remember wedging in a seat near a window and, in front of me, was a box crammed with old black and white photos of bands from the early years. I think there was one of Green Day playing at lunch at a high school. (Sorry, Todd, if everything was a blur that first day.)

Back to the story. I started writing reviews of shows I went to and some of my photos got in *Flipside*, too. This was pretty cool because we were getting into shows for free because of the magazine. Sometimes we even got to hang out with the bands. I know, what a fucking groupie, but I could do it and you couldn't, so shut up. The best show ever was the Hootenanny in '98. Dale managed to get our *Flipside* passes somehow upgraded to all-access, which I didn't know until the very end, when I used it to get on stage with X and popped off some great pictures. Ah, live and learn.

Next was the downfall of *Flipside* and the birth of *Razocake*. The details of are all

muddled in the past. At this point, I was given a promotion to a columnist if I would review the comics, which was what Ken had proposed to do but never committed. Thanks Ken! This was a big deal because then I had a deadline, which I can honestly and sheepishly say I haven't always kept, but think I'm getting better at keeping. So, yeah, I've got a great gig.

I also remember them coming up with the name and the initial slogan for *Razocake*, ("Cutting... Tasty") and I was all, "What the hell does any of this mean?" It was kind of put out for all the contributors as a contest, but it all worked out. The comic-reviewing is oh-so-cool because, for the most part, the reading is fun and just like the music, something will come along that gives me total enlightenment and joy.

I've also received some nice personal thanks from some of the writers of said comics. If I could ever make it to a comic convention to actually meet them, that would be the icing on the so-called *Razocake*.

Strangely enough, we met most of the people at bowling, whether at Eagle Rock's All Star Lanes on Sundays or in Vegas at Punk Rock Bowling. If we had never bowled with Dave Guthrie (tattooist who designed the *Razocake* logo). The pai gow table would be no fun if there weren't a large presence to calm down the locals. You know what I mean, Dave.), we would still have to ask around for the best tamales on Christmas Eve. Instead it's turned into a tradition, along with all the other backyard cookouts we've been invited to over the years. If it were not for bowling, we would have no photos of Chris Devlin in a kid's size Spiderman shirt, Jim and his wife in Viking helmets, or Todd's dad, who is the best simply because he wanted my autograph on my article page.

There are so many others that, for some reason, I'm drawing a blank on. You've got to know we love you, too. This is starting to sound like a thank you list. Well, I'm never going to record anything, so maybe this is it.

Well, that's it. This is my story of how I made it to the 50th issue of *Razocake* magazine and, if we're lucky enough, we'll see you all in another fifty at number one hundred. It's at milestones like this that we need to thank those who read and support independent print and music, because without you, we'd be stuck in front of a television set watching lip-syncing idols.

-Gary Hornberger





CLARE CRONIN

Punk and alternative music was like getting a Wonka Bar:

There was always the chance of getting a musical golden ticket.



A MONKEY TO RIDE THE DOG

SEAN CARSWELL

"One of the strange side effects of this poverty was that I started getting fat."

TEAM DONOFTHEDEAD

The Dogtown documentary doomed us.

Don scored us a couple of tickets for an advanced screening. There was a beautiful sense of excitement before the film, hanging out in the morning fog of downtown L.A., standing in the very spot where Jon Fante starved and typed and wrote about starving and typing in *Ask the Dust*. And the documentary was good. A lot of cool, old skating footage, anyway.

That's what Don and I talked about afterwards: the skating footage. We didn't talk about the part in the movie when the filmmakers chose to show a map of Los Angeles and put a star on Paul Revere High School, thereby alerting filmgoers everywhere to the exact location of one of L.A.'s best kept secrets. The fuckers who showed the map were the same fuckers who talked about beating up anyone who gave away their secret skate spots. So be warned, Stacy Peralta: if I ever see you in person, I'm going to punch you in the head. Because, sure enough, the week after *Dogtown and the Z Boys* was released nationally, an eight-foot high fence was constructed around the Paul Revere parking lot, a twenty-four hour security guard was hired, and signs promising to arrest skateboarders were hung intermittently.

I wasn't much of a skateboarder prior to moving to L.A. I did have a skateboard. It was about forty-five inches long. When I lived in Cocoa Beach, I used it to ride down to the beach and check the waves. Sometimes, I'd ride it to a downtown bar or to the library.

The move to L.A. changed things considerably. For one thing, I was painfully poor that first year. Todd Taylor and I were trying to get *Razorcake* off the ground. Nearly every cent we had, we poured into the magazine. Nearly every cent we earned, we turned back into the magazine. One of the strange side effects of this poverty was that I started getting fat. The Mexican joint around the corner sold huge burritos for three dollars. And, when you're surviving on about thirty bucks a week, six-for-a-dollar packs of Top Ramen seem like a good idea. So, yeah, you gain weight. Skateboarding seemed like a good way to counteract a cheese-and-corn tortilla-heavy diet. The problem was, I was too poor to buy skating gear.

Don took care of this.

You may know Don as Donofthedead, a legend of the *Razorcake* record review section. But Don is more than a guy with fifteen thousand records in a back room in his house. He's also the unacknowledged skating guru of *Razorcake*'s early days.

Don solved the problem of my longboard skate. He passed on to me a deck that allowed me to maneuver the high banks of Paul Revere without breaking my neck. I put my big, soft longboard wheels on that deck, and Don again took pity, scoring for me a set of harder, faster wheels. When he saw me fall one too many times, he passed on a set of camouflage knee pads, a little cracked on the left knee but nothing shoe goo couldn't fix. When he ordered a pair of Vans that were too big for him, he passed them on to me instead of returning them. Thus, I was inducted into Team Donofthedead.

In that first year of *Razorcake*, we skated Paul Revere nearly every weekend. Todd and I did. Don came along most weekends. Various other *Razorcakers* joined us occasionally. The first time I skated there with Don, he still had a cast on his wrist from a spill he'd taken several weeks earlier. At least I think he did. (If Don's wife, Leslie, is reading this, then I stand corrected. Don never skated with a cast on his wrist.) Shortly after he got that cast off, he took another spill and broke the other wrist. He wouldn't admit that it was broken. We had lunch at a noodle shop after the session. Don worked his chopsticks with fingers that were turning blue, just past a wrist that was swelling to three times its normal size.

Paul Revere was a great place to get back into skating. It was basically a parking lot cut into a hill. On three sides of the parking lot, the hill was paved going up about twenty feet. There was also a road coming in from a higher parking lot, so you could roll down the road and gather enough momentum to ride up and down the hill as if it were a ten-foot wave. After about twenty yards of this, you ran into another paved, ten-foot high hill that you could roll up, kick turn, roll down, and ride the wave back to the road. It's hard not to love a place like that. We showed it love in a way antithetical to the image of punk rock skateboarders. We brought push brooms and swept away the stones before skating. We picked up any trash that might be in our way. We left the place a little nicer than

we found it. Then, that bastard Stacy Peralta made his self-aggrandizing documentary and Paul Revere was a bust.

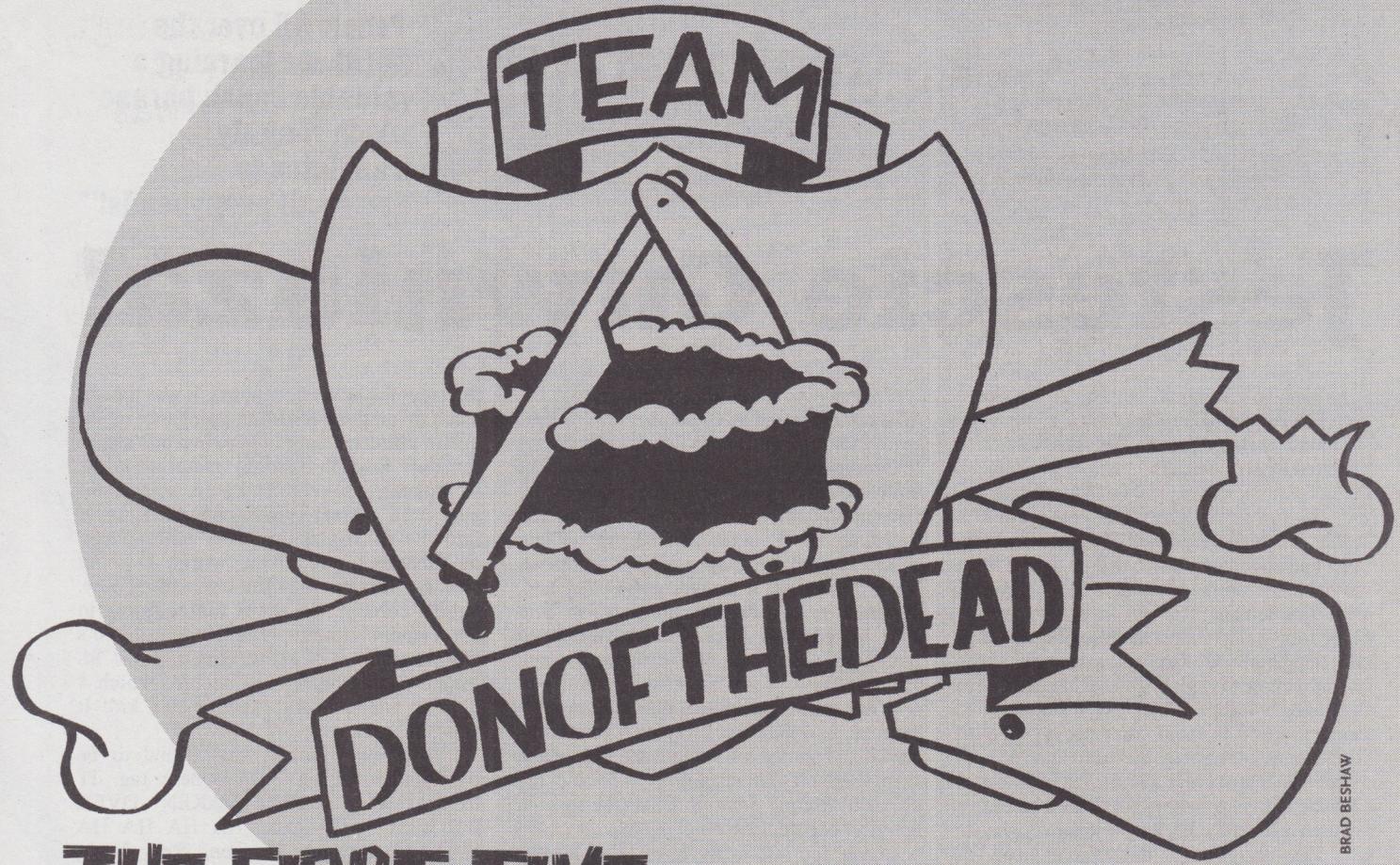
Next, we started skating at an abandoned pool out in La Habra called the Jungle Bowl. It was a frequently graffitied spot. Whenever the skateboard wheels hit fresh graffiti, the surface would get slick and you'd slide. Sometimes this was fun. Sometimes, it was painful. We told *Razorcake* photographer Dan Monick about the spot—an abandoned pool cut into the high-priced hills of the L.A. suburbs, weeds and new growth taking over where a house had once stood and burned down, everything east to Riverside visible on clear days. Dan wanted to come with us and take photos. The spot was as picturesque as Dan pictured it, and he started snapping right away. Unfortunately for him, he expected Todd and me to be like those X Games skaters. The only time we caught any air was accidental and ended with a splat. Not great for photographs. Lucky for Dan, two other skaters showed up midway through the session. One of them was pretty amazing. He performed feats worthy of Dan's camera.

We skated Jungle Bowl for a few months. I tried and tried without success to get enough momentum to carve above the pool light. I found a line that would get me just below it. Before I could find that new, perfect line, local high school kids started partying out at Jungle Bowl on weekends. Cops started noticing. The property owners repaired the break in the fence. They posted no trespassing signs. The cops added the spot to their regular patrols. Rumors circulated about skaters getting arrested. Jungle Bowl was a bust. We started heading to city skate parks.

Don taught me how to drop in at the San Dimas skate park. He taught me to power slide at the skate park in Whittier.

By this time, *Razorcake* was up and running a little more regularly. Money wasn't quite as tight. We had a little leeway with regards to ad space in *Razorcake*, so we started making trades with Mike at Beer City Skateboards. I got a Duane Peters deck, wide trucks, new wheels, the works. I passed the deck that Don had given me on to *Razorcake* illustrator Art Fuentes. In that way, he joined Team Donofthedead.

For a while there, it seemed like I was spending a fair amount of time with Team



BRAD BESHAW

THE FIRST TIME I SKATED WITH DON, HE STILL HAD A CAST ON HIS WRIST.

Donofthedead. We hit a number of parks from Pico Rivera to Montalvo. The city of Duarte put in a new park right alongside the 210, and we explored a little less and skated there a little more. We spent a lot of time at the Whittier park, too, because Art lived around the corner from there.

Don was a little less stoked about the parks. He liked the hidden skate spots. One weekend, he and some friends hit an abandoned pool somewhere on the west side. He took a nasty spill and landed on his back. The next weekend, Don and I skated the park in Brea. Don took one spin around the bowl and decided to sit out the rest of the session. I took my turns, but mostly hung out and chatted with Don. He kept talking about the spill he'd taken. His back was still hurting from it. A week later, he had to have back surgery. His skating days were over.

Todd, Art, and I talked about this a few weekends later at Whittier: Todd with Don's old trucks and wheels under his deck; Art with Don's old deck and wheels; me with Don's old knee pads and shoes. It was a sad moment. It was the real beginning of the end.

The skate park in Upland is gnarly. It has a huge half-pipe going into a full pipe and ending in a bowl. You can drop in from the top or roll in from a four-foot-high ledge. I'd been having a good day rolling in from the ledge and riding the half pipe into the full into the bowl and back. Then, this old guy came along and started tearing shit up. He made dropping in from the top look so easy. I couldn't resist.

Just before dropping in, I said to Art, "I don't know why I'm trying this. It doesn't matter if I can do it. It does matter if I break my arm."

Art smiled.

I dropped in. It worked. I carved up and down the half pipe and thought, damn, this is fucking awesome. I made it into the full pipe with way too much speed. My trucks started wobbling. I tried an ill-advised power slide while about twelve feet up a wall, ended up taking the short cut to the ground and snapping a wrist bone in half.

Before my cast was off, Art blew out his knee at Whittier. Before Art could walk

again, Todd broke his leg in two or three places at a backyard pool in Hermon. Team Donofthedead was done for.

Now, when I think about the early days of Razorcake, I think a lot about Team Donofthedead. I think about it mostly when I ride home from work and pass the new onramp, where a retention ditch has a road that runs alongside a bank paved into a hill. It looks like another Paul Revere carved alongside the freeway. I sometimes spend the last five miles of my commute imagining Team Donofthedead climbing the fence and riding that ditch in a world where cops won't kick us out and our bones and tendons are young enough to take the impact.

These days, I mostly go surfing alone. Maybe it's not quite as fun, but wipeouts are way more forgiving.

-Sean Carswell

THE DINGHOLE REPORTS

RHYTHM CHICKEN

"People all over the world are learning a valuable Polish phrase which roughly translates to 'You're all poopyheads!'"

Jestescie Guwniaza!

The Dinghole Reports
By The Rhythm Chicken
(Commentary by Francis Funyuns)
[Edited by Dr. Sicnarf]

So, I'm sitting in my Las Vegas cave of a room, listening to the new Dillinger 4 album. I'm thinking about how I will be seeing them in late June on the other side of the country, and I'm looking forward to it. Two nights ago, Bad Religion and the Vandals played at my neighborhood skatepark nearest my Vegas home. I chose to work at the job I hate instead of attending that show. The meager wage seemed more worth it to me. I can't put my chicken finger on it, but I believe this has a lot to do with what this magazine is about... at least to me. Maybe if I were writing for *SPIN* I would've chosen differently. Eh, non sequitur.

This brings us to the topic at hand (or in wing, if you will). You are now holding the 50th issue of *Razorcake*. I'd say you're a pretty lucky duck. Being one of the few columnists who have been here since the first issue, I feel somewhat compelled to comment on what this magazine has been to me. It's been the good sort of kick in the ass. If I weren't supposed to write these reports once every two months, I might not have been doing this Rhythm Chicken thing this long. What started as a dumb idea to help fill up a summer in northern Wisconsin has turned into something, well, a bit more odd and long-lived. This coming July 1st will be the ten-year anniversary of my first show. Ten years, ten states, three countries, two continents, and one professional baseball team secondary mascot later, and this chicken's still scratching. This is due, in part, to the very publication you are reading.

It was some summer in the early 2000's, and I was living in Milwaukee. Editor Todd Taylor was going to be up in Green Bay with some bands. I had to work early the next morning, but decided I simply had to go. I drove two hours north and walked into the Concert Café. I soon found Todd and walked him over to the Speakeasy bar next door. I also met the majestic Davey Tiltwheel, and we all enjoyed pitcher after pitcher of Pabst together. Later, the Speakeasy was in full swing, and I whipped out the chickenkit for some ruckus. In mid-gig, Davey lovingly swings a full pitcher of Pabst into my head. I was on the floor in a puddle of beer foam. It was perfectly executed chaos, and appreciated. How many *SPIN* writers would've enjoyed it?

About five years later, I flew from the Wisconsin permafrost to Southern California, ready for ruckus under the palm trees. A fifteen-year-old girl and her family were enjoying a *quinceñera* party out in some Escondido town park. Suddenly, a scary van pulled up and about ten questionable looking folks hopped out, carrying a drumset. They quickly set it up facing the party and, suddenly, one of them wearing an Ed Gein shirt pulled on a chicken head. He started pounding out some odd drumbeats in a raucous manor. His clan of helpers hollered and danced. Then after a few minutes, he stopped, and they just as quickly tore down the kit and hauled it back into the van, which then sped off. No explanation. Would the editor of *Rolling Stone* ever partake in such activity? Me thinketh nein.

Over the last many years, I've always enjoyed wearing a special T-shirt which plainly says "EIICY OEE, POCR OPP" across the front. Acquaintances of mine familiar with my love of Poland will usually ask, "Is that Polish?" I sometimes tell them it's an old Polish rhyme, but then say, "The real strange thing I've found is what it says when you do this," just as I fold said shirt on a horizontal axis to exhibit quite an English insult. I think a few of them still believe it actually IS a Polish rhyme, and the hidden English insult is a crazy coincidence! Would *Alternative Press* print up such a shirt? *Nie w milion lat!* (uh... that's in Polish)

Some years back, this magazine's editor asked if the Rhythm Chicken wanted stickers made. Lacking enough motivation to really get them made myself, I jumped at the chance. He utilized the amazing punk rock network of friends this magazine helped to create, and a few weeks later I had a nice stack of free RC stickers in my mailbox, which were instantly adhered to everything and everyone within reach. Now, I've gone the extra mile and reordered the same sticker design numerous times. People all over the world are learning a valuable Polish phrase, "Jestescie guwniaza!" which roughly translates to "You're all poopyheads!" Would *CMJ* help me call the people of the world a bunch of poopyheads? *Nu.* (uh... that's in Romanian)

So, for two separate years this last decade, I was living in Krakow, Poland. I had a favorite day every two months. I called it *Razorcake Day*: that day when each new issue arrived in my rusty old commie mailbox. I would cancel any other

plans for the next many hours. It was time to catch up on the interesting goings-on of the music culture I love. Knowing my desire for any English reading material while in Poland, the editor would sometimes also cram a great classic paperback novel into the packaging with the issue. Then, on the other side of the world, I would also get a taste of home by reading Rev. Nørb's column. I'll never forget sitting in my cement commie pad reading Nørb's recollections of visiting Green Bay's St. Mathew's church parish picnic, which I used to attend every summer as a kid! It was too much.

This brings us to what I find to be the greatest aspect of this here rag. IT IS SLOWLY BEING TAKEN OVER BY WISCONSINITES! HA HA HA HA HAAAAA! Rhythm Chicken, Rev. Nørb, Maddy Tight Pants, and Dr. Lord Kveldulfr, Ph.D. All Wisconsin. We know what a bubbler is! We know what a Friday Night Fish Fry is! We know what booyah is! We all know how to polka! We all inhale cheese in near-fatal amounts! We all know what a Smelt Fry is! WE KNOW WHAT SMELTING IS! We all say "bag" the correct way! We all... well, you get it. Three of us even graduated from the same high school. Damn-three of us grew up in Allouez. How many other widely distributed music magazines would dare invite such Midwestern lunacy? *Nie duze* (Polish again, sorry.)

Then there are the many cool folks I've befriended and met because of this here magazine. Then there are my old friends around the country who now say they like keeping up with my antics through this very mag. Then there's the pile of music to the sky I've come to know and love because of this here mag. Then there are the amazing political pieces printed in here, which I've shared with my non-punk friends who have continued flipping through newer issues. Then there's my *Razorcake* model Cold War Skateboard, which has been carving around many Las Vegas concrete skateparks lately. Then there's Gorsky Press, and the great reads I've enjoyed because of the relation to this magazine. Then there's....

Then there's the editor's parents! About four months ago, I moved here to Las Vegas for the winter. Todd's parents live in nearby Boulder City. They are two of the coolest people I've ever met. They've helped to make

**Ten years,
ten states,
three
countries,
two
continents,

and
one
professional
baseball
team
secondary
mascot later,**

**this
chicken's
still
scratching.**

my move here most enjoyable! How many other editors would help his writers meet his parents for bike rides and other good times? In fact, how many other magazines' editors would introduce their writers to his parents who then helped to arrange a situation for the writer to partake in and write about in their son's magazine?

Dinghole Report #101:
Head'm Off at the Pass!
(Rhythm Chicken sighting #429)

Tony Taylor is a very active volunteer for many athletic events in the Boulder City area: triathlons, bike races, foot races, and the like. A few months back, while we were biking the River Mountain Loop Trail, he asked if the Rhythm Chicken would consider playing for a 10K-run. I'd never played for a race of any kind and thought it was just peculiar enough to be fun. Between

Las Vegas and Boulder City, you will see the Railroad Pass Casino. It is located on a mountain pass adjacent to the same mountain loop trail where the run was to take place.

I was "comped" a room at the casino hotel and a few meals for my participation! Yeah! I was playing the Railroad Pass Casino... or at least the back parking lot! It wasn't until the day of the race that I found out it was a Mardi Gras-themed race. Many of the runners were dressed up in outlandish Mardi Gras outfits. Before the race, I unleashed some wild Wisconsin rhythms on the runners. Some danced. Some applauded. Some were simply baffled. A gunshot signaled the start of the race, and my rhythm ruckus sent the runners down the trail-a thunderous sendoff!

A while later, the first runners were approaching the finish line. For each runner or group of runners to finish, I played a healthy

dose of Midwest drum beats. Incidentally, this was by far the highest altitude I've ever brought my ruckus to! What excitement! Later, the last of the runners were trickling in past the finish line. For each one who approached the end of the race, Tony would yell out, "Drum 'em in, Rhythm Chicken!" It was exactly the type of Chicken gig I didn't expect to get in Las Vegas. I loved it!

Next month I'm slotted to play at the Roy Martin Middle School talent show, in the ghetto, here in Las Vegas....at the age of thirty-eight. Another run-of-the-mill Vegas show.

FIFTY CLUCKS FOR RAZORCAKE!
CLUCK! CLUCK! CLUCK! CLUCK!
CLUCK! ... (oh, you get the picture)

-Rhythm Chicken
rhythmchicken@hotmail.com





MY STUPID LIFE

BY MITCH CLEM
WATERCOLORS BY NATION OF AMANDA



SIDE STORY ABOUT SNAKEPIT: HE ONCE THREW A RELEASE PARTY FOR HIS SECOND BOOK AT MONKEY-WRENCH, AN ANARCHIST BOOKSTORE COLLECTIVE IN AUSTIN.



HE GOT THE ARRIVALS TO PLAY, FEATURING PADDY FROM D4 ON BASS.



AT SOME POINT DURING THEIR SET...



ANYWAY, THIS PARTY WAS A COUPLE MONTHS BEFORE THAT...



WE DRANK A TON OF LONE STAR AND LISTENED TO MASONIC YOUTH.



BEN HAD A FRIEND VISITING FROM OUT OF TOWN GIVE HIM A PRISON TATTOO OF A CHICKEN WING



SOMEONE MADE VEGAN FOOD



AND I GENERALLY JUST ANNOYED THE CRAP OUT OF ANYONE I CAME IN CONTACT WITH.



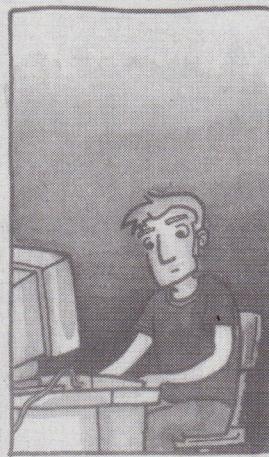
EVENTUALLY, AFTER CONSUMING COPIOUS AMOUNTS OF MISCELLANEOUS CONTROLLED SUBSTANCES...



AT 1AM CENTRAL TIME ON FEBRUARY 15, 2007, WE DRUNK-DIALED TODD TAYLOR, EDITOR OF RAZORCAKE. WE GOT HIS MACHINE.



UNPHASED, TODD EMAILED ME THE NEXT DAY AND SAID I WAS WELCOME TO ADD A COLUMN TO MY RAZORCAKE CONTRIBUTIONS ANY TIME I LIKED.



(AND NOW I ONLY MISS 40% OF MY DEADLINES!) THIS NIGHT IS ALSO DOCUMENTED IN SNAKEPIT 2007, STRIP "2-14-07"

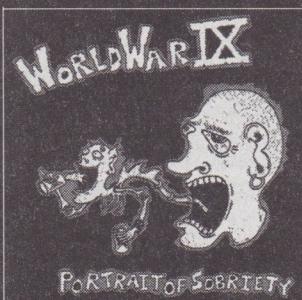
THE END!



WORLD WAR IX



WE'VE GOT YOUR EYES AND EARS COVERED

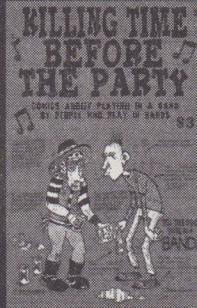
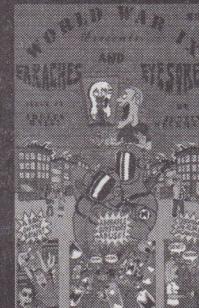


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30 YEARS
OF
CALIFORNIA
HARDCORE
AND
NO SIGN
OF LETTING
UP!

Hatred On The Rise

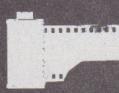
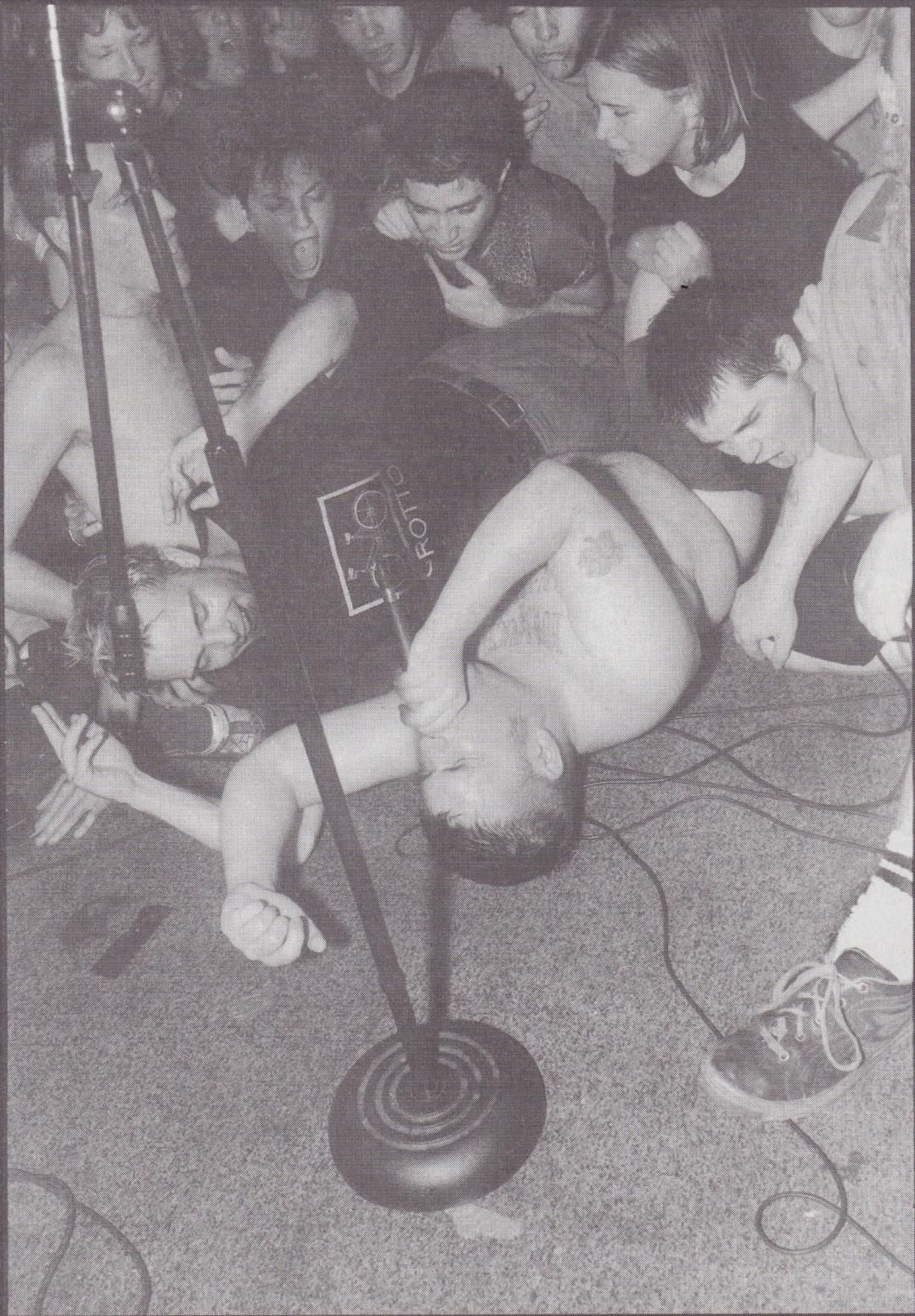


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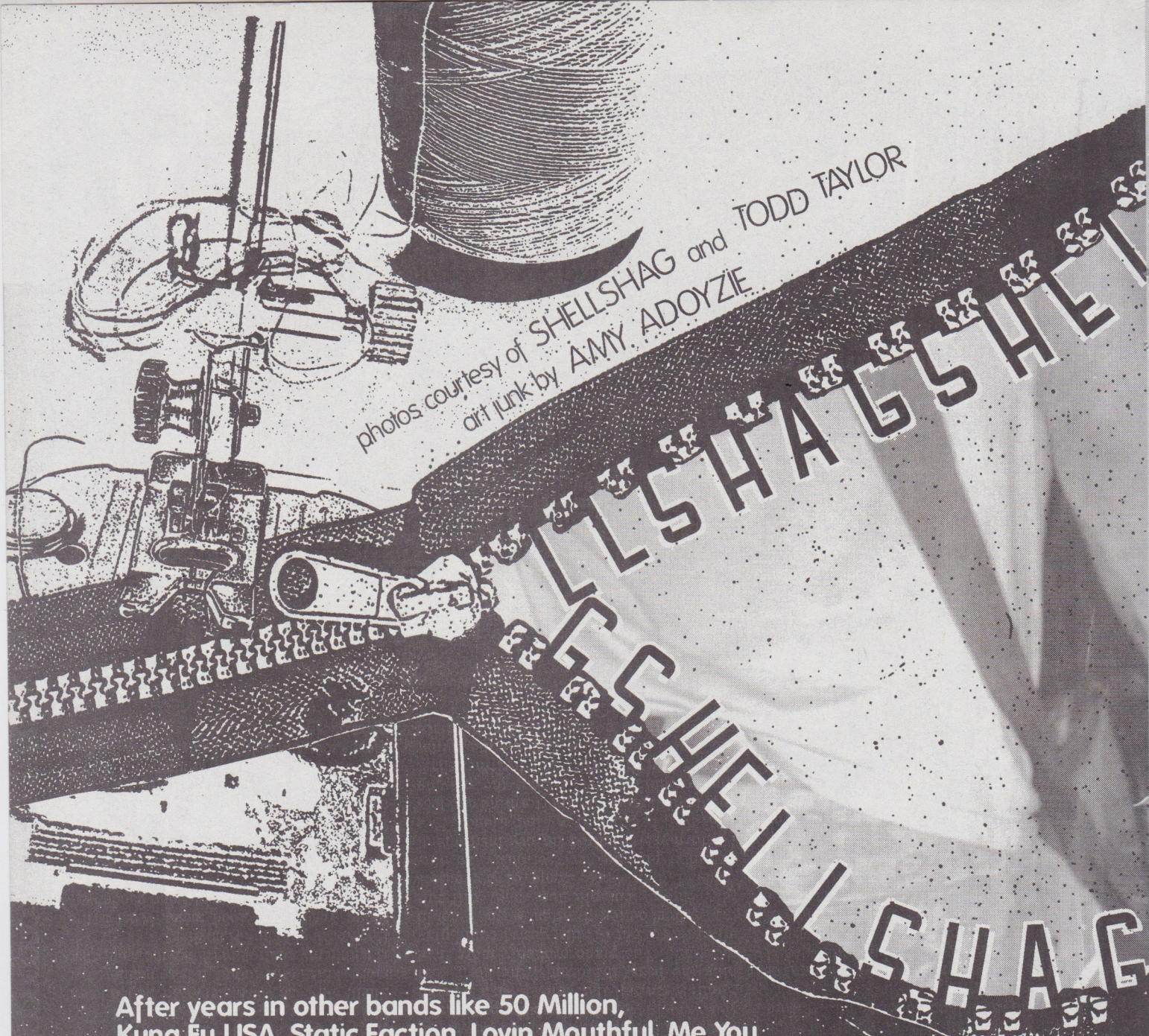
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Dan Monick's Photo Page
Dillinger Four



photos courtesy of SHELLSHAG and TODD TAYLOR
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After years in other bands like 50 Million, Kung Fu USA, Static Faction, Lovin Mouthful, Me You And The Boys, and Noise Star, Jen Shagawat and Shellhead formed Shellshag, a two-piece sludge punk band, in 2004. Using minimal arrangements and minimal gear, the music is designed to inspire people to be themselves. Shag is strapped with bells and body percussion and jumps around like a tribal banshee, while singing and playing a stand-up drum kit. Shell plays simple heavy guitar riffs with two amps. The songs range from messy pop songs to emotional ballads with driving, repetitious rhythms. The lyrics are about love and death, making and losing friends, growing up and surviving. In the spirit of fun, trust, and experimentation, Razorcake asked Shell to interview Shag and Shag to interview Shell. What the hell; they know one another better than anyone else. What happens when two band mates, lovers and best friends "interview" each other? This...



TODD TAYLOR

Jen Shag is my soul mate—always has been. She's my best friend and my partner in every way. My life would not be complete without her. The first time I saw her was at the door at Starcleaners Warehouse in 1996, and she looked like an angel. When I saw her rock the drums, it was a done deal. She's been on my mind ever since. Together with her I can live this life forever. —Shell

Shag enters [laughs]

Shell: Okay, first put a record on.

Shag: Well, I bet you know what I'm gonna put on.

Shell: No. I don't, but it's going in the interview.

Shag: I guess I should've dressed up a little. I had a great turquoise outfit on earlier.

Shell: It's just me. Nice ponytail thing.

Shag: Our turntable doesn't even play anymore. [The music starts playing.]

Shell: Dead Dog. Good choice. All right.

Shag: I love this album.

Shell: What's the last show that you went to?

Shag: Where we didn't play, or where we played?

Shell: Where we didn't play. It wouldn't really count otherwise.

Shag: Well, I do remember the one I tried to go to and missed. The Don Giovannai showcase.

Shell: Who was playing? Why did you miss it?

Shag: Screaming Females, Pregnant, Cheeky, and like five other bands were playing, but I wrote four songs instead! I had a creative spazoid, remember?

Shell: I remember. It was on the guitar.

Shag: I'm really psyched about it because I haven't written a song in a while.

Shell: Are you gonna play them on guitar when we play live?

Shag: No, I'm gonna figure out drum parts.

Shell: How has that gone in the past?

Shag: Really good, actually, because you write your own parts and make them sound better.

Shell: What was the last show Shellshag played?

Shag: SUNY Purchase, New York. The last band that I saw that I really loved would be Cheeky.

Shell: How is it here in New York compared to San Francisco?

Shag: I have a bittersweet relationship with San Francisco. It was the perfect place for me at one time, and now New York is the place for me.

Shell: Speaking of SF, tell me about this place? [Shell holds up a picture of the Starcleaners Warehouse.] (Starcleaners was a music/art warehouse Jen ran in San Francisco in the 1990s. Many different bands played there such as Tribe 8, Hickey, Brian Jonestown Massacre, The Dandy Warhols, Gaunt, and thousands more.)

Shag: What do you wanna hear about Starcleaners, Shell? ["Why why why do we live this way"] The Dead Dog record is playing in the background: "Why why why do we live this way."]

Shell: I just want you to tell the *Razorcake* readers about it in general. I mean, our label is named after this place.

Shag: Well, now it's like a place of nostalgia in my mind, because so much has happened since we last left the warehouse in 2001. Now it's just kind of the first creative expression I ever got to execute. I daydreamed in college with my friends about creating the perfect community. [The music speed starts slowing and speeding up voluntarily. Laughter.]

Shell: [Shell goes to fix the music.] This interview keeps falling apart.

Shag: Hey! [Shell gets rough with the turntable.] That is not a good idea!

Shell: Okay, let's just start over from the beginning. [Starts the Dead Dog record again, same side. Laughs]

Shag: Look how nervous we are. Why are we nervous to interview each other?

Shell: I'm not nervous. Tell me more about Starcleaners, the warehouse. How did it end?

Shag: Well, our daydream for the so-called perfect community was a space where people like us could live and make art and music happily ever after. It was excellent. In the beginning, six of us all lived in this two-story house with a long basement-type warehouse. We made clothes, sculpted, played music, painted, and we built a huge stage. It was a lot of fun until it was gradually put to a halt by gunshots, fist fights, valuable lessons, and a fat, naked free loader running at you with a hammer and a lazy eye. [Laughs]

Shell: So things changed after that?

Shag: Yeah, big-time. That was my home for many years. After that, we traveled around. We toured Japan and Europe. We didn't live anywhere until settling in NY in 2005.

Shell: Was Shellshag going on during this time?

Shag: Shellshag was always going on when you and I played together without anyone else, but we weren't formally doing it, like, "We're gonna call this Shellshag and be a formal 'band'."

Shell: What about the shows at Sadie's Flying Elephant and the early Fillmore shows?

Shag: Well, I guess, during that time, every Valentines Day, right? Jimmy Shotwell would book us at Sadie's Flying Elephant, and we would go down there and do love songs. It was super fun—sitting in the living-room-type environment, playing acoustic, smoking inside. It was relaxed and fun. We dressed formal. It was the same at The Fillmore. We would get asked to play in the lounge, which is a space inside the Fillmore where bands play small sets between the main acts that are performing on that night. The first time there was with King Crimson.

Shell: Were those the first Shellshag shows?

Shag: Yeah. Right? They were dates for us. Wouldn't you agree?

Shell: Yeah. Tell me about Kung Fu USA.

Shag: Super power trio: me, you, and Danny shredding on the bass! We did only one tour but released three amazing records and opened for Iggy Pop and The Cramps. All those songs were really born from the turmoil and conflict growing in SF in the late '90s. About losing friends. Some of your greatest songs, I think, Shell. We still do them live sometimes, but they are just not the same without Dan. It was the last band I played a full kit in! Let me ask you a question!

Shell: My questions aren't that bad. Let me ask some more.

Shag: This is a blast.

Shell: You've been playing a stand-up drum kit for about four years. Do you miss playing the traditional kit?

Shag: All the time—for certain and obvious sound reasons—but not really live at all. I love being up front with you and, as Ari Up put it, "Shaking my tribal ass!"

Shell: When did you start playing drums and when was your first live performance?

Shag: I started playing drums when I was sixteen. Everyone told me not to quit my day job, but I continued to play. My first live performance was in 1990.

Shell: In what band?

Shag: Lovin Mouthful when I was living in Columbus, Ohio.

Shell: Was that the first band you played in?

Shag: Actually, the very first was the New Bomb Turks, but I never showed for practice, so I was replaced before we ever played. Lovin Mouthful was my first. We were a tough all-girl band that didn't give a fuck. My friend Wendy was the singer.

We were badass! The same group of girls plays together now with our manager from back then playing drums. They are called The Mary Anns.

Shell: As a woman, do you think you play a special role in music?

Shag: Absolutely.

Shell: Why do you play in a band?

Shag: When I play, even though I know it sounds totally ridiculous, I feel amazing. It's just a feeling. It's the only time I actually do something that feels totally worth the trouble. It's the only time I feel relaxed and free.

Shell: Is touring now the same as it was in the beginning?

Shag: No, not at all.

[Gets up to flip the record.]

Shell: Do you think women get a fair shake in the rock'n'roll game? [Laughs]

Shag: Now, yes, but there's still rampant sexism. It is not the same obstacle it once was, but just like there will always be racism, there will always be sexism. I prefer to empower myself as a woman by blasting through those obstacles instead of complaining about them.

Shell: In Shellshag, what does Shag represent, ya know, in terms of expression? [Dead Dog side two starts: "You don't even know who you are or what you're doing."]

Shag: Woah. [Laughs] I would like to stand for outer body experiences and true emotional freedom.

Shell: All right. Who is your hero?

Shag: I have so many, but right now, you're my hero, Shell.

Shell: What was your favorite show of 2008?

Shag: 2008! Favorite show! [Laughs, Shag scratches head.] New Year's Eve at the Fort. Always, last two years, New Years Eve at the Fort. (The Fort is a house that does shows, run by Stupid Party and others.)

Shell: Name a band that is a good role model.

Shag: Any band that's managed to stay together.

Shell: What are your feelings on vaccinations? [Big laughs. Shag is excited.]

Shag: Thank you for that question. I would never ever vaccinate my child, and I wouldn't recommend that anyone vaccinate. The CDC (Center for Disease Control) and the government are lying to you for the sake of making money. Do your research and you will find that the reasons you are told you need these shots has nothing to do with your protection from illness and everything to do with selling you a product. These vaccinations actually cause problems they claim to cure and can cause many other serious problems such as autism.

Shell: What do you see the next Shellshag album being like?

Shag: I want to just be inspiring. You turn it on and you're like, "Fuck yeah! Today's gonna rule."

Shell: How do you see your role in Shellshag? [Jen starts the Dead Dog album again.]

Shag: You asked me that already. It's like you telling your Newport cigarette story at the new wave party.

Shell: No, it's Parliaments at a Tears For Fears concert.

Shag: I can't believe I didn't remember that!

Shell: Is that your favorite repeated story of mine?

(Shell got sick chain smoking Parliaments at a Tears For Fears concert in 1984 and tells the story too much)

Shag: Favorite? That's saying a lot.

Shell: How many times a week do you listen to this Dead Dog record?

Shag: At least three times a day, so that would be twenty-one times a week.

Shell: That means I have too. Great record!

Shell: Okay, this is my final question. Are you ever going to open another space again?

SHAG: Do you ever wish we had a traditional relationship?

SHELL: I thought we did.

SHAG: Awesome.

Shag: I think about it, but sometimes I realize how unnecessary it is 'cause there are so many good places around right now already. I think I prefer traveling to visit and play them all.

Shell: Okay, thank you very much.

Shag: Thank you.

I met Shell in 1996. It was love at first sight and I hated him for it. He was the guitar player in 50 Million at the time. I would show up at Starcleaners in a shopping cart and try to bum rush on to a show. I always let them play. They were amazing and inspired me in every way. After trying to not be together, we finally couldn't stand being apart. After his return from a 50 Million tour in 1997 we got together and have been ever since. -Shag

Shag: All right, my first question. [Shell sort of giggles and slurps some avocado that he is cutting and eating.]

Shell: I don't wanna be eating avocado. Can we wait?

Shag: I don't think eating avocado is so bad.

Shell: It's just like I'm pigging out and I want to pick a record. [Shell puts on The Wipers *Is This Real*] All right, I'm ready.

Shag: Okay, so after growing up through your twenties in San Francisco, are there any rumors you want to dispel? [Wipers blasting "Return of the rat, return of the rat."]

Shell: That's a question? [Laughs] Why don't you just ask the question?

Shag: From your crazy past living in the San Francisco '90s drugged-out music scene, are there any rumors you want to dispel?

Shell: Any rumors? Are you trying to ask a specific question?

Shag: Not really.

Shell: I am not aware of any rumors. [Laughs]

Shag: Cool. Why do you keep playing shows?

Shell: It's an extension of my life that's meaningful to me, and I have discovered that it is something that I want to keep a part of my everyday life for as long as possible. Forever, if possible. It gives me a sense of purpose, more so than anything else in my life.

Shag: Do you have any regrets?

Shell: No.

Shag: Did you know that before you write a new song or invent something like the Noize Toy, first you talk a bunch, get really hyper, and freak people out? (Shell invented a toy that contains a USB device hidden inside. He hand sculpts each toy, and the USB device contains the band's album and an exclusive video. The first one is Triclops! *Out of Africa*, courtesy of Alternative Tentacles.)

Shell: Yes, doesn't everyone do that? [Laughs]

Shag: No, Shell, that's all you. Do you ever wish we had a traditional relationship?

Shell: I thought we did.

Shag: Awesome. Does music really matter?

Shell: Yeah, in a trillion different ways. Different ways to different people.

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Shag: Do you feel like an honest person?

Shell: Yes.

Shag: In the music you write, are the lyrics and the subject matter made of truth or fantasy?

Shell: I think it's more like art therapy or self-discovery more than anything else. I don't have too many songs that I have written that I put together a story frame for. Most of the time, not even the basic concept, focus, or direction of the song will have any pre-intention. Most of the time I lock in on the idea or story while working out a chorus, but every now and then a beauty comes along that remains a mystery until months or years later, and the song tells me what it's about just as it does for the listeners. However, there's always truth, even in fantasy.

Shag: Yeah.

Shell: That's probably more than you wanted to know.

Shag: No, I thought it was a good answer. Do you ever wish you played another instrument?

Shell: Yeah, all the time. I wish I could play the bass, the drums, the horn, and the piano. The piano probably more than all of those, but I really wish I could play the guitar better. I often wish I could play more complicated and difficult leads. I didn't take some of the basics of guitar playing very seriously, so now I find myself limited on my instrument. However, because of my impatience, I've spent much more time performing and less time practicing by keeping the playing simple. It's the best thing for Shellshag, too, because without a bass, the guitar can't afford to noodle all over the place

anyhow; it would just sound like a no-structure racket. Wait, I think I'm onto something. [Laughs]

Shag: But yet you enjoy it?

Shell: Oh yeah, absolutely. Maybe I'll learn more skills in the future. It is something that is within my control, but I like the range that I'm working within. [Laughs]

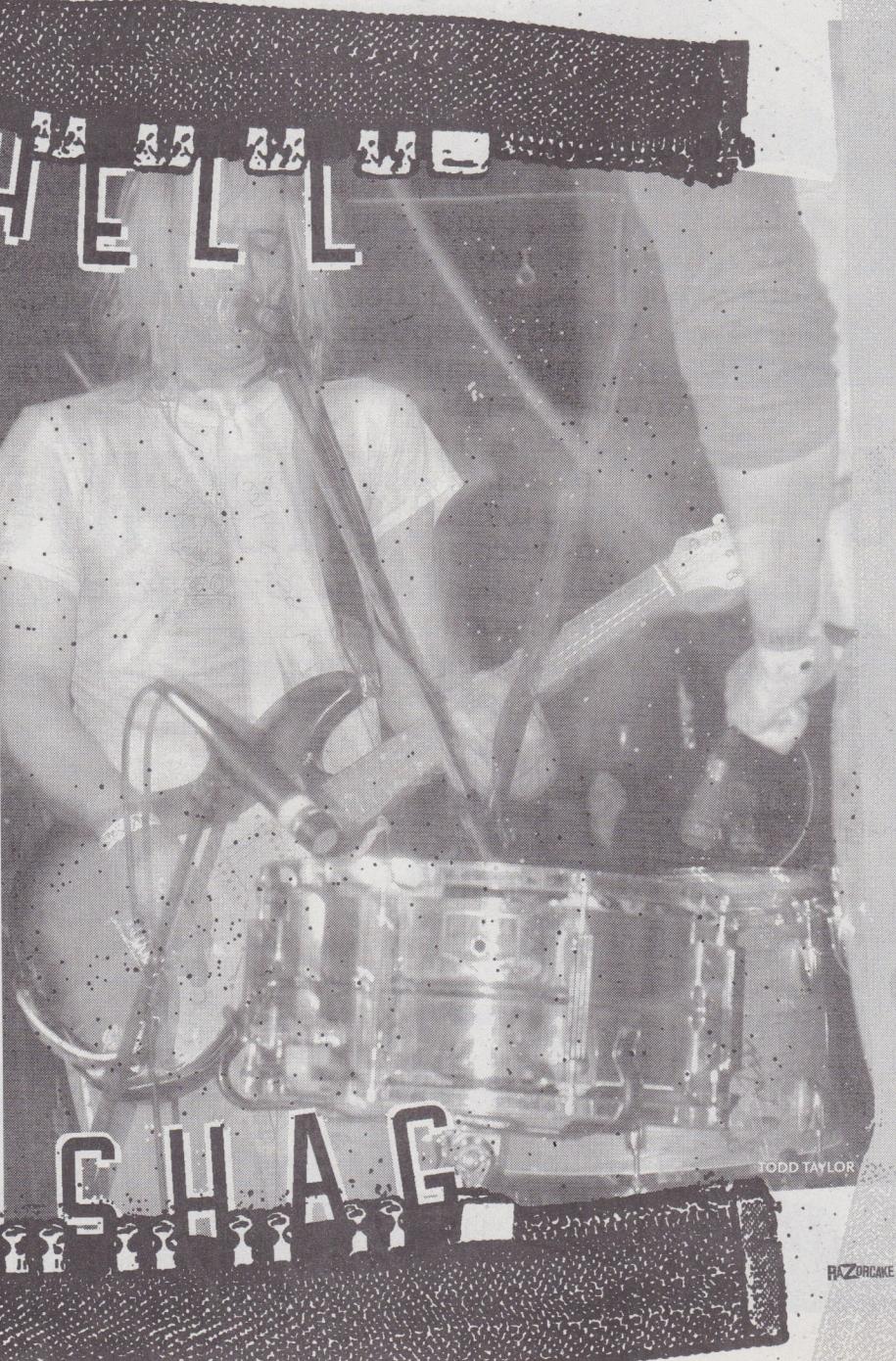
Shag: Yeah, it's a good range. What is the thing you like most about your bandmate? [Giggles]

Shell: There are too many things, I guess.

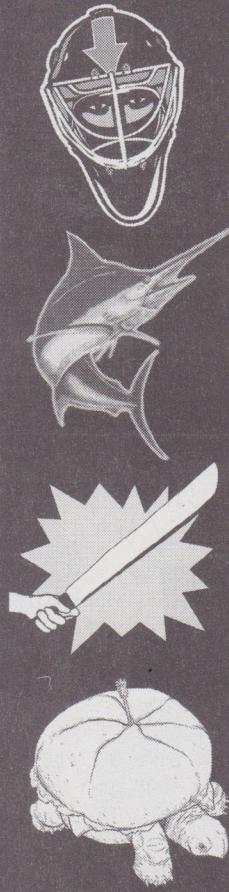
Shag: Name one thing—about your bandmate, not girlfriend.

Shell: I like that you always play hard and that, when it all comes down to it, we're not just out there screwing around, but that it means something. [Shell eats more avocado.] Next question.

SHAGSHELL
Because of my
impatience,
I've spent much
more time
performing
and less time
practicing
by keeping the
playing
simple.



TODD TAYLOR



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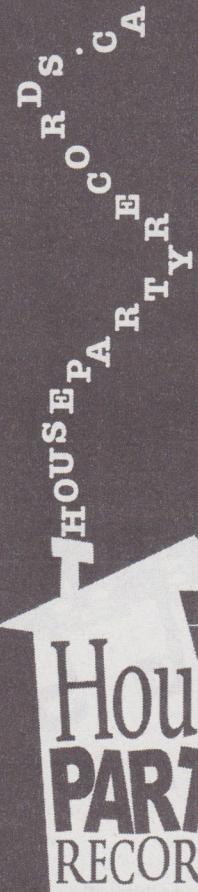
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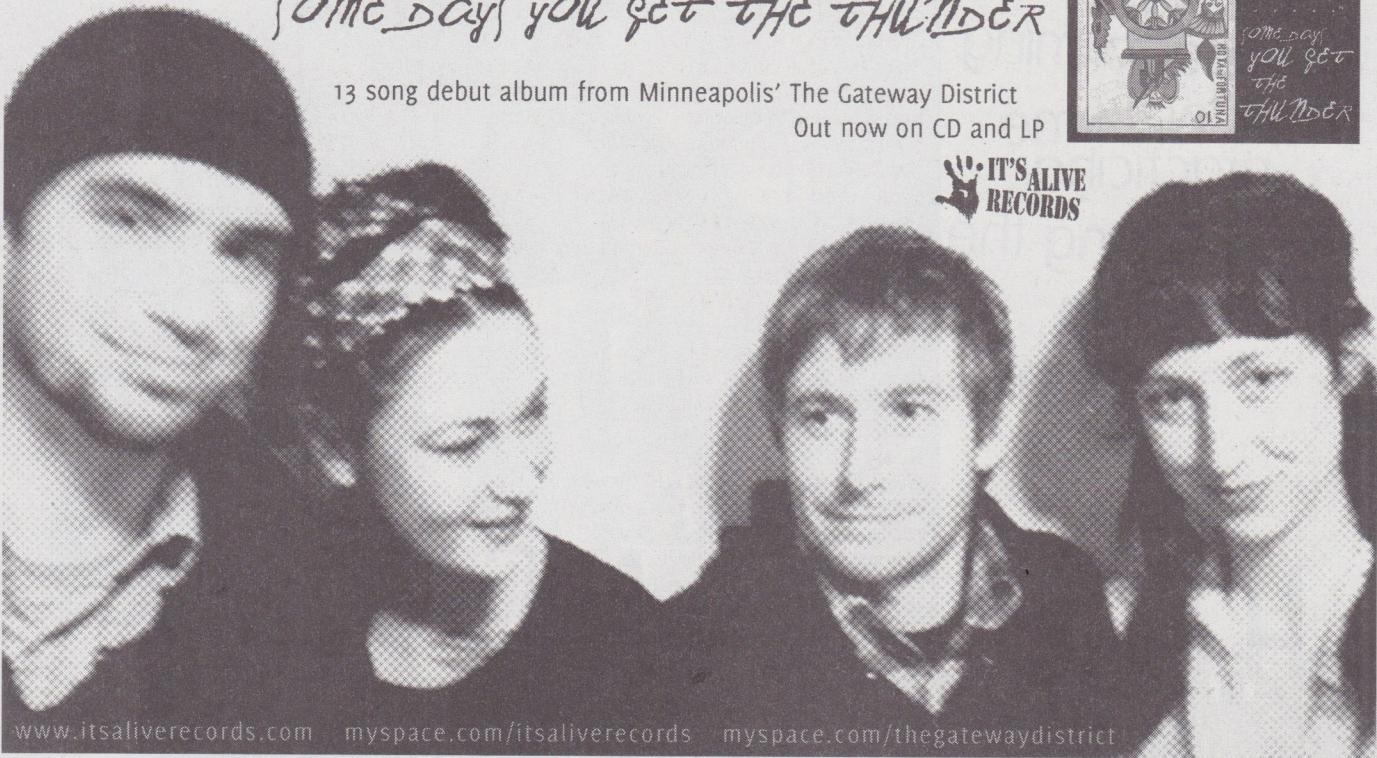
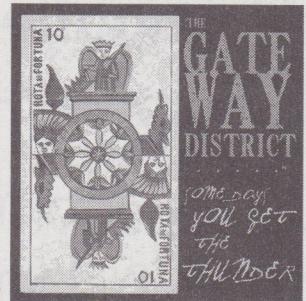
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Shag: What is the thing that annoys you most about your bandmate?

Shell: That you do not load the van the exact same way as me. [Laughter]

Shag: Name someone that you respect and admire.

Shell: My father. I admire and respect my father. He's kind of the king of DIY creations, if you ask me. My father is a square dance caller, and he runs his own square dance label, and he has done that for a living for fifty years. He sent three kids to college, made a life for himself, and it puts the DIY rock scene to shame—the little world created for square dancing. It's so together. Anyway, so yeah, so my dad and that's why I even gave you the why. [Wipers play in background: "In time I found myself wishing you were here."]

Shag: How many records do you think you will put out before you die? Personally and on your label.

Shell: Full albums? Or, a record that I'm on somewhere?

Shag: Well actually, full album, well, okay like a single here and there.

Shell: I'd like to think I could get to fifty. Coming up on twenty now.

Shag: All right and then the label?

Shell: The label? We got to get to two hundred at some point. We are cruising along pretty fast now. Coming up on thirty and thirty-one and we got the Noize Toys, too. [Shag laughs] There's a lot of stuff on the plate. We got "Club-ducted,"... (One of Shell's many ideas for a club. This one would be a UFO on top of a tower that the bands would play in. From the ground, it would look like it was attacking and that is where you would watch the band from.)

[**Shag:** yells "Oh no!"]

Shell: ...and "Rocko Bell" (Shell's venue ideas). Not to mention the original Starcleaner movie. [Claps hands and sighs nervously. Laughs.]

Shag: We have been playing lots of festivals lately. Which one is your favorite?

Shell: I would have to take it back to the Do Ya Hear We festival last year in Chattanooga, although every single festival we played was totally killer! Mauled by Tigers, Best Friends Day, The Fest in Gainesville, and the first ever SXSW Starcleaner Showcase with The Slits and The Dicks. [Wipers in background: "Tragedy oh woah tragedy."]

Shag: Cool. What's your favorite color?

Shell: You know, I could really say anything on any given day, but today I'd say green. [Shrugs shoulders.]

Shag: Where would you like to live after New York?

Shell: If I could fit in some other places, I would live a little in Amsterdam, for a summer. New Orleans, maybe Japan for a while. We are all over the place every year, on tour, so we stay in a bunch of different places as it is. Chattanooga! Just so I can go to the Pickle Barrel everyday.

Shag: [Laughs] You would, too.

Shell: I would. I would work there the morning shift, eat lunch, and stay thru

through dinner eating fried pickles and having Bloody Marys. I would have to have another job, too, because after hanging out there all day I'd have spent all my dough. What else do you got? Ask me about that article.

Shag: What article?

Shell: [Looking all serious] That one that keeps popping up everywhere.

Shag: The article from the Eric Lyle book? *On the Lower Frequencies*? There was an interview with you.

Shell: It's not an interview; it's a story.

Shag: A story on 50 Million, right?

Shell: It's a story on 50 Million. [Shell trails off, mumbling.]

Shag: A lot of people have mentioned it to me, and it seems like it has really had an impact on some people. How do you feel about the article?

Shell: I definitely have some thoughts. That's why I asked you to ask me the question. [Shag laughs] There's a personal comment in the story that is not accurate. The story is about me and my brother Wade's band, 50 Million, and includes a comment from Eric claiming I spent rent money on speed. I never spent anyone's rent money on anything but rent. I have no idea what he's even referring to, but it's untrue, unfair, and hurts my feelings.

Shag: Well, it's interesting that you say that because I feel like people create their own news. What is written isn't always true and people create myths. There's been a lot of that in music.

Shell: Yeah, and to do so I've now published the damn insult once again, so let's move on. Next question. [They both laugh.]

Shag: What's another band you want to put out on the label?

Shell: Now there's a question, man. I'm pretty psyched about the records we have coming out, so I haven't got to thinking about it. (Future Virgins, Kreamy 'Lectric Santa, and Thee Headliners all have an LP/CD coming out on Starcleaner) I don't know. I want to find someone that sounds like Squirrel Bait.

Shag: Do you wanna have kids?

Shell: Yes. And no. [Both laugh]

Shag: Very honest answer. What do you think of my new songs? Honestly.

Shell: I like that one a whole lot, and I don't care for the other three.

Shag: [Laughs loud] Oh.

Shell: Sorry. [Still laughing]

Shag: Why do you hang guitars in front of the window in our room?

Shell: 'Cause they look cool. [Gets up to change record.]

Shag: That's not why!

Shell: It's the best place for them. That freaking wall is plaster and the screws don't really stay in easily. The wood framing around the window makes it easy for the guitar hooks. That better? Dude, this one now. [Shell holds up Buddy Miles *Them Changes 12"*.] This is the one.

Shag: Yeah, *Them Changes*. [Shell starts the record. "My mind's been going through them changes."]

Shag: Who would you say influenced Shellshag's destruction and breaking of things?

Shell: DMBQ and The Who. (DMBQ is a psychedelic punk band from Japan.) Maybe a little 50 Million.

Shag: Do you think that the limitations of our band musically—that we have such little equipment—is sometimes frustrating?

Shell: No, I don't think it's frustrating, but it certainly defines us. It's not like we have just been doing a demo and looking for a bass player.

Shag: Yeah.

Shell: Once you set into it for a certain length of time, you have to accept that the band's line up defines the band, and changing that would require a different band, band name, et cetera. I could see us experimenting with more players for the sake of a certain song or set of music, but I don't think I would want any other permanent members. What about you?

Shag: [laughs] No, I feel like this is our band.

Shell: I wouldn't mind recording with more instruments, like we did on "Happiness" and some other tunes. Playing live, I prefer it the way it's been. It's so symbiotic.

Shag: Would you say that's also why we never practice?

Shell: I think we play so much that we don't often need to; the time is better spent writing new songs, instead of just hammering through what we have already been playing ten to twenty times a month. We practice when we have new songs to add to the set list.

Shag: Any advice for our readers?

Shell: Best piece of advice I could give the readers here: Don't ever use the words "band meeting." If you want to talk to your band about something, then call them over, make them dinner or something, and talk away. Don't have a meeting. It is a mistake.

Shag: Thanks, Shell.

Shell: Thank you.

We have learned a lot during this interview: that you are always your own harshest critic, worst enemy, and that you would probably hate yourself if you met yourself somewhere. We also learned that Shellshag is a rock'n'roll love story that we have always wished for and, although it can be embarrassing to discuss, it is our life.

Thanks for reading. Love and respect,
ShellShag

KELLY LONE



Sometimes a record seems so in sync with the world around me that I have trouble understanding why it's only in my headphones and not pouring from loudspeakers across the city. 2008's *Resignation Day* by Banner Pilot was one of those records this last winter. Walking past the dead trees that line the empty streets on my way to work, it just sounds right. This is a record of fairly hopeful songs covering fairly dismal subjects, with lyrics reminiscent of the best pages from *Cometbus*. Musically, it's what you should expect, considering that half of Banner Pilot once formed half of Rivethead; definitely file this one under gritty pop punk.

Aside from the obvious (well-written songs), what makes Banner Pilot special is that their songs have a certain "calm before the storm" quality that you won't hear anywhere else. Whether they're muted and mid-tempo or as fast and loud as any could manage, there's a constant grey undercurrent suggesting that everything is about to fall apart, but, you know what, fuck it, we'll manage. Or maybe these are just good songs.

In any case, I'm not the only one struggling to articulate why I enjoy this band as much as I do. You'd be hard-pressed to find a lukewarm review for their 2006 EP, *Pass the Poison*, or their 2007 split 7" with Monikers. And less than a month after the vinyl release, it's no easy task to find a *Resignation Day* LP. All five hundred sold out almost immediately. Nick and Nate took some time late one night to answer some questions.

NICK JOHNSON: vocalist, lyricist, and guitarist

NATE GANGLEHOFF: bassist and primary songwriter

DANNY ELSTON-JONES: drums **CORY AYD:** guitarist



INTERVIEW by SAM NORTH
PHOTOS by KELLY LONE
and NICK JOHNSON
LAYOUT by KEITH
ROSSON

Sam: Nate, you buy MP3s instead of records and recently said that, from here on out, you'd be writing/publishing books instead of zines. Also, you do your reading on a Kindle (a device for reading electronic books) and Banner Pilot has a Twitter (an internet "social networking utility") account. Why are you trying to kill punk rock?

Nate: Wait, Black Flag had a Twitter account, right?

Sam: They may have. It didn't come up in *Get in the Van*, but I heard that was all bullshit anyway.

Nate: Man, Twitter is awesome simply because you can follow Shaq.

Sam: I had no idea. What kinds of updates does he post?

Nate: Shaq yesterday: "At Firehouse Subs, dat turkey on wheat wit extra mayo is gooder dan a mug, lol."

Sam: You're fucking with me.

Nate: Actually, I'm going to sound like an idiot no matter how I answer this, but, basically, I think that some of the things you mention are nothing more than new communication tools. Like, at one point, I thought email was kind of silly. Now it seems normal and it makes sense to use it.

it with a rolled-up piece of paper, a pin, and a pencil.

Nick: Explain.

Nate: Really? You put a pencil through the hole of the record, spin it, have a pin taped to the end of a rolled up piece of paper in the shape of a cone. You will hear shit.

Sam: I'm going to try that later with a record I don't care about.

Nick: That's the way I listen to all of Traffic Street Records' (interviewer's label) releases.

Sam: Yeah, yeah.

Nate: The simple convenience of having thousands of songs in your pocket is great. MP3s are worse in the sense that we're probably heading towards losing the concept of an album, which really sucks. And, yeah, you can't stick a pencil through an iPod and put coned paper up next to it.

Nick: When Ben Weasel did *These Ones Are Bitter* as digital only, did it really feel like an album?

Sam: I think it did, yeah

Nate: I don't know...

Nick: It had twelve-plus songs.

Sam: Yeah, but could you *feel* it?

Nate: He put extra time in the middle to

really get listened to by anyone. I'll get some band's record on my computer and forget that it's even there.

Nate: There might be some truth to that. I guess for me, I definitely listen to more music now.

Sam: You're probably right. Just that it's so much easier now to record and spread music around makes that true. With there being so much more, it's natural for some of it to get lost in the shuffle.

Nick: Nate, stop killing punk.

Sam: How's the new album coming? I saw that you guys chose the anniversary of Kevorkian's first assisted suicide to kick off recording.

Nate: These guys wouldn't listen to me! They wanted the second suicide. I said, "Nope."

Nick: I knew that was a special day for Nate, so we made it happen.

Nate: But yeah, it's going good! Or is that "going well"? We have all twelve songs written and just some minor stuff to figure out.

Nick: It's coming along really well.

Sam: So it'll be out in a year or two?

Nick: [laughs]

I've seen some Japanese reviews of our records when translated that all say, "Pop flat tire!"

Sam: What about the old communication tools though? Do you think the physical zine or record is important?

Nate: The zine is still important because anyone can do it. I guess I never got into vinyl. As a kid, I never understood what made it better than cassettes or CDs. My friend Zack said that records are sort of like pogs that go along with songs. They're cool to look at, but they don't make the music any better or worse.

Sam: Now that vinyl comes with download coupons and people just burn CDs to their computers, I like to think of them as big receipts. **Nate:** Yeah, don't get me wrong—vinyl is great in the sense that you get a nice, big layout and I really like the concept of sides—I think it sucks that we've lost that with MP3s. I don't think we should—or need to—discard vinyl, or books, or whatever, but I don't think we need to hold onto them for nostalgic reasons if something as good or better comes along. I still read books a lot, but I also read them on the Kindle. Same words, just a different way of reading them.

Sam: Do you think the digital replacements are as good or better?

Nate: They're better in some ways, for sure. I love how the music spreads around so easily and quickly with file sharing, or whatever you want to call it.

Nick: Vinyl's great because you can listen to

simulate the idea of sides, which is kind of goofy but I like that stuff.

Nick: I'm old.

Sam: I think you've got a point. It didn't feel like an album to me. It was a bunch of files on my computer.

Nick: At least put in tape-changing noises like the Copyrights did.

Sam: But now the Copyrights released that record as a tape and they still left the tape-changing noises in, which seems kind of redundant...

Nate: There's definitely something to the way it used to work. You'd hear about an album coming out. There'd be a release date. You'd pick it up, put it on, read the lyrics. Now, more often than not, I'll just press a button in iTunes or whatever, throw the songs on my iPod, and listen to them later without the lyrics.

Nick: I love the idea of disintermediation. I learned that word the other day and thought this was a prime time to use it. It means the bypassing of intermediary institutions.

Sam: Nick?

Nick: Removing this middleman. Getting rid of pressing plants, distro costs, et cetera.

Nate: Right, there's that too. It's a lot easier now to get your music heard in the first place.

Sam: It is and it isn't, though. It's easier to get heard by more people, but much harder to

Nate: It'll be out in time for the anniversary of the fifth suicide.

Sam: But that was yesterday!

Nick: We're toying with the idea of self-releasing it.

Nate: Yeah, it'll be a quicker process this time around.

Sam: I always thought you chose a strange path for the release of *Resignation Day*, so I think that self-releasing it could be a cool idea, which is what you did with *Pass the Poison*, right? Arsenic Records is just you guys?

Nate: It was fucking weird, no doubt. I don't even remember half of the reasons for the delays, but yeah, *Pass the Poison* was self-released. We're going to upload MP3s via Twitter and that'll be the album.

Sam: Maybe get Shaq to split-release it?

Nate: Shaq on Twitter: "Say it ain't so what I'm reading about Michael Phelps. Is this real?"

Sam: Shaq does not really say this stuff! You're making it all up.

Nate: All real! Dead serious. "Is A-Rod done? What's goin' on here? Ahhhhhgg. What iz da world comin' to?" Anyway, yeah self-releasing could be fun.

Sam: So are you guys gonna follow this record up with more touring?

Nick: I think we're tentatively planning on heading straight south to Texas and then east to the Fest in October. I've never even been



NICK JOHNSON

to New Orleans, so I'd love to play there. We've got a sweet \$1,000 van from the '80s emblazoned with "GLADIATOR" on the spare tire.

Nate: Yeah, more touring around the Fest, most likely, and then Japan or Europe early in 2010.

Nick: You wouldn't guess it, but Japan really loves pop punk. I've seen some Japanese reviews of our records when translated that all say, "Pop flat tire!"

Sam: Is that the translation for Banner Pilot or for how your record sounds?

Nate: I think "flat tire" is "punk"—maybe?

Nick: I think that may be the genre Japanese kids classify us in.

Sam: I can see that. You do sound a little deflated.

Nick: Nice!

Nate: We have spinners.

Sam: On the Gladiator?

Nate: No, I'm speaking metaphorically here. But yeah, the new record has been fun to write. There's a lot more writing in the practice space and less of mapping out drum beats and crap in PC Drummer.

Sam: Are those keyboards comin' up yet?

Nate: No keyboards!

Sam: I thought they were comin' on LP2!

Nate: Well, maybe...

Sam: That's more like it.

Nate: The record is called *Keyboards to Success*.

Nate: I think it will be just that—*Your Keyboard to Success*. This is the one for Banner Pilot.

Nick: We actually have a song on this new record that is going to be 135 BPM (beats per minute), if you can believe it. The last one

had the astonishing range of 195-200. I think we had one 201.

Sam: You guys definitely are digital kids.

Nate: Dude, if we don't do this BPM shit it sounds ridiculous. Like we're doing speed, and then quickly doing 'ludes or something.

Nick: Before the last record, Danny (Banner Pilot's drummer) did tests to see who recorded to a metronome and who didn't. Nate, do you remember the results?

Nate: Yeah. I think he was shocked the Marked Men were not in perfect time, but Teenage Bottlerocket was dead on.

Sam: Of course they are. That's how they get that empty, lifeless sound to all of their records. I think Teenage Bottlerocket may actually be robots.

Nick: Cylons!

Sam: What's a Cylon?

Nate: It's a nylon for a cyborg, right?

Nick: *Battlestar Galactica* reference. For the cool kids.

Sam: I'm learning more in this interview than I did at school today.

Nate: Tomorrow at school you should stand up and say, "Fuck you, Professor. You don't know what's real. Cylons and Twitters, man."

Nick: Yesterday, we got a box of one hundred *Resignation Day* LPs from Kiss Of Death. I'm stoked.

Nate: They're sweet. I used one as a coaster to rest my iPod on. [laughter] Kidding! They look great.

Sam: I can't wait to look at the one I'll keep for myself before I stick it in a box forever.

Nate: Some of them are different colors. MP3s are only one color—no color.

Sam: So if you guys self-release the new

LP, are you going to sate the kids with a vinyl release?

Nate: Yep, we'll do vinyl for the new one. Vinyl, CD, digital. And a twelve-part cassingle series.

Sam: Can I get a subscription? Will it be limited to twenty?

Nate: You'll have to get in line when we set up the cassingle preorder page.

Sam: Send me an e-vite once you upload it at least. Unless it'll be on your Twitter, in which case I'll just follow that.

Nate: No, I will e-ventually do that.

Nick: We're taking a page from the Chuck Ragan book and releasing the demos on vinyl, then doing six 7" with two songs a piece, then doing the real deal on vinyl, and then maybe a live album.

Sam: No, you have to release the live album before the studio album.

Nick: Then an acoustic version.

Sam: I'm still waiting on the acoustic *Empty Your Bottles*. The campfire sessions.

Nick: In my head, it sounds awesome. Recorded, not so much.

Nate: *Keyboards to Success: The Lonesome Campfire Recording Sessions*.

Sam: Sounds like we've got a concept album on our hands!

Nick: I mentioned I have a ukulele a few times to Nate. He does not seem impressed.

Sam: Have you guys heard the leaked Green Day song "21st Century Breakdown"?

Nate: It's like they wrote a good song and then said, "Let's 'Jesus of Suburbia' this shit and pretend we're Queen at the same time." I'm excited to hear the album though.

Sam: The "Jesus of Suburbia" thing worked once, but...

Macho Man's publicist threatened me but I was like, "Dude, fuck you."

Nate: Right. It's like an *American Idiot* b-side. But also, it's a demo, so I'm willing to withhold judgment.

Nick: Do you realize there's a fourth guy in that band?

Sam: Yeah, Jason from Pinhead Gunpowder.

Nick: What's his other band?

Nate: Influenta.

Nick: I saw them play at First Avenue and later that night headed into the bathroom at the Triple Rock. Lo and behold, Jason was taking a piss. Totally awkwardly, I said, "Hey, you wrote 'Second Street' right?" "Yeah." "I like that song." Then I walked out. Ah, memories...

Sam: I think "Second Street" is the worst Pinhead Gunpowder song.

Nick: I'm glad you weren't in the bathroom with us then.

Sam: How about The Thorns [dramatic pause] Of Life?

Nate: Oh yeah! I think there are some really, really good songs on that Gilman recording—and a few I couldn't get into. I hope they get rid of the first song. It's like a weird mix between "Sliver" by Nirvana and "Blind Man" by Aerosmith. That is not a compliment.

Nick: I love Blake and Jawbreaker and Banner Pilot wouldn't be Banner Pilot without Jawbreaker having existed, but I gotta say, that guy's a weird interview.

Nate: Overall, I think it sounds great and an actual recording will be better. "It" being the album, not that song.

Nick: It's a super group, so there's some intrigue. Nate refers to his other band, Gateway District, as a super group in the same way "ketchup is fancy."

Nate: In the same way McDonald's ketchup is fancy!

Nick: I stand corrected.

Sam: Who's in Gateway again? It's you and Brad and someone from the Soviettes, right? And a fourth?

Nate: Yep, Maren from the Soviettes and Carrie from the Salteens and American Monsters.

Sam: From the Salteens or from the Influenta?

Nate: Just the Salteens.

Nick: Funny story. I ran in to Carrie in a bathroom...

Sam: Didn't I hear there's going to be a Gateway LP later this year? Or am I making that up?

Nate: Yeah, the album is recorded and mastered. It'll be out on It's Alive.

Nick: Our practice space is pop punk central in Minneapolis.

Nate: So I've heard. Who all practices there?

Nate: Banner Pilot and The Manix right now. Used to also be Off With Their Heads and Dear Landlord. They still occasionally use it.

Nick: Yeah, we've got Pretty Boy Thorson & The Falling Angels, Apocalypse Meow, the Manix, and I show up yesterday and Dear Landlord is on the schedule.

Nate: And the Legendary San Diego Chargers.

Sam: I've heard of the San Diego Chargers. Is that Jesse and somebody?

Nate: Jesse and Dave from PBTATFA plus Brad.

Sam: Your space is supergroup central, you know, in that "fancy" sense, anyway.

Nate: It's like a bizarre NAFTA.

Nick: PBTATFA. Is that an acronym that gets used?

Nate: It is now!

Nick: I was updating our show listings today and didn't want to write out their full name but Pretty Boy Thorson "ATFA" seemed odd.

Sam: Yeah, it's difficult. It's tempting to just say Pretty Boy Thorson, but you don't want to hurt the feelings of the Falling Angels lest they become Fallen Angels.

Nate: It'd be cool if someone in the band was named Fall and he tried to seize second tier by calling them "Pretty Boy Thorson and The Fall and Angels."

Nick: Our practice space building has a lot going on. Yesterday, walking down the hall, I realized a death metal band plays right next door to a Somali band. Nate reviewed some of the bands he heard through the walls for his book.

Sam: I almost forgot what we're doing here. Nate, tell us about this new book that you've written and are currently touring bookstores across the country to promote!

Nate: Yeah, it's called *You Idiot* and it's a compilation of some zines I used to do, plus new material. It's a lot of essay-type stuff and goofy articles.

Nick: Nate's a hard-hitting journalist. He pulls no punches when reviewing Hulk Hogan's rap album from the '80s.

Nate: Macho Man's publicist threatened me but I was like, "Dude, fuck you."

Nick: Zip zap, it's a rap attack.

Sam: Oh, I read the article, back when it was in a zine.

Nate: I hope you didn't injure your hands on one of the staples. Try a book sometime. They're great.

Sam: Primitive garbage. Why read a book when I could buy a Kindle 2.0?

Nate: Now you're catching on!

Sam: You want to hear something funny?

Nate: Yes!

Sam: I was kind of afraid that this interview was going to be too serious. Like, we were gonna tackle some heavy issues. But I think that all went out the window as soon as Shaq's Twitter came within the bounds of our radar.

Nate: I thought the stuff about the Cylons was pretty deep.

Nick: Like I told Punknews—meat is still murder, dairy is still rape. But I figured you knew that so we didn't have to go there.

Sam: Yeah I think I read that at some point. And speaking of which, Nick, are you vegan or just a patronizing jerk?

Nick: I guess I have made two vegan references already haven't I? Shit...

Sam: You're done, son.

Nick: I was just goofing on Propagandhi. I better throw out that last joke I was working on.

Nate: Their new record has a pun title.

Sam: Have you heard it yet? With the internets and what not?

Nate: Nope. The last one I heard was, uh, *Fake Empires* or whatever. Did not like it.

Nick: Awesome name for a record though, *Supporting Caste*.

Sam: It took awhile to grow on me, but I like it now. I wish I could say the same for *Potemkin*. I'm trying, but it's been three years and I can just barely appreciate four songs on it.

Nick: That band is great though. That I Spy split and *How to Clean Everything*.

Nate: I haven't heard either one in years, but I preferred the first album.

Nick: Rivethead opened for them once back in the early '00s and, unbeknownst to me, the other opening band took my guitar. Chris could not have been cooler rooting through their trailer looking for it.

Sam: What do you guys do outside of Banner Pilot? What is it that keeps you guys from touring the same way that, say, Off With Their Heads have been for the last million years?

Nate: I don't know. I've done four to five week tours a few times before and I just get burnt out after that much, let alone nineteen months in a row or whatever Off With Their Heads have been doing.

Sam: So, for you, it's not a job back home as much as it is just not liking to tour too much—or for too long at once—anyway?

Nate: No, I also have a job, but I guess what I'm saying is that even if the option was there, I probably wouldn't tour eight months out of the year.

Nick: I'm in school and also crunch numbers at a company where I bitch about TPS reports.

It's gives me great lyric material. I've noticed half the songs I write are about leaving in some way or another. The rest are made up of drinking and "complex" women.

Sam: Do you like to tour, Nick?

Nick: I love it. I'd do it full-time if I could.

Nate: To be clear, I think touring is a blast. I just like it in moderate doses. But, yeah, if the option was "Your job is to tour for eight months of the year, or work twelve months," I'd obviously pick the former.

Nick: I love checking out new cities and meeting new people. You show up and find friends you never knew you had.

Sam: So once you get out of school, do you think you'll pursue a heavier touring schedule?

Nick: It's not school that holds the touring back; that's just a few nights a week. The nine-to-fives are what kills it.

Nate: I'd like to get a point where I can work from home or on the road, then I could leave for tour whenever.

Nick: That would be ideal. Nate, if we can secure that "drink holder from the mic stand" franchise, we are set.

Nate: Yeah, what was it called—Wiggy Ziggy or something?

Sam: So would you say you guys are at a point, touring-wise, that you're comfortable with?

Nate: Well, we don't tour much at all. Ideally, it would be more, but it's not terrible now. I can deal with it.

Nick: Ideally, I'd like to do a month a year. I'd have to cut back on the lattes but, what the fuck, I'll live.

Sam: That sounds like a pretty realistic goal. You probably came close to that last year, right?

Nate: If you include Fest and Midwest shows, yeah, probably almost a month.

Nick: As long as I'm back for Corn Days in Long Lake

Nate: If one person reading this gets a Corn Days reference, that's awesome.

Sam: [laughs] Explain to me exactly what Corn Days in Long Lake is... or are...?

Nate: It's a festival in the suburb I grew up in.

Nick: Nate and I used to live out west in a city called Orono/Long Lake where every year they have an "awesome" town fair complete with crane games and bingo.

Nate: I haven't been to it since I was thirteen. But, yeah, it's bingo and corn and sketchy looking rides.

Nick: I, on the other hand, have been there the last three of four years. With a five-dollar stamp, you can get all the corn on the cob you can eat.

Sam: That's gotta be like three cobs!

Nate: I think I wrote about it in a zine at one point.

Nick: Last year I showed up and the band on stage—obviously geared towards little kids—was doing "The Train Song," which consisted of the guy palm muting. It was fantastic.

Sam: How are palm muting and trains related?

Nick: Chugga-chugga-chugga-chugga.

Sam: Seems a little contrived...

Nick: Don't pretend you're above this shit, Sam. He chugga-chuggas then stops and the kids toot-toot.

Sam: Oh, well in that case...

Nick: You should sign those guys.

Sam: Have them send me a press pack. Or a promo pack. Or whatever people call that garbage.

Nate: I prefer "revenue enhancement package."

Sam: Do you guys have a press kit? Has Banner Pilot reached that level of professionalism, as a member of the Go-Kart Records family?

Nate: No press kit as far as I know.

Sam: I'll bet Guff has one.

Nate: I wrote a little Word document that I sent out. Like, "Hey, we're a band and we sound like these other bands. Wheee!"

Nick: Nate was super pro. It was like "Here's our CD. If you're bored, check it out—or not! Cool, Nate."

Nate: Actually, no joke —one review was like, "These guys sent me an awesome letter with the record." So that was cool.

Nick: Didn't MRR only review vinyl at one point?

Sam: I don't know... sounds like something they'd do.

Nate: I remember *Heartattack* refused to review any record with a UPC code on it.

Sam: Shit's not punk.

Nate: I have every *Maximum Rocknroll* from 1992 to 1998 in my parents' attic.

Nick: Do you have the #1 Northern California scene review? That one's worth almost ten dollars. *LP2* is financed. Word.

Nate: Or, probably, the rats in my parents' attic have every *MRR* from 1992 to 1998 in their stomachs.

Sam: *Pass the Poison*'s got that UPC.

Nick: It came free from the pressing plant.

Sam: And you took 'em up on it? You saps. Now they've got you, you know, in their clutches and such.

Nate: How else do we get into the Sarasota Barnes and Noble?

Sam: Not through the front door, that's for sure.

Nick: I'll give a shout out to Noiseland in Minneapolis. Free UPC and one hundred free glossy promo posters with your order. That's the secret to our success.

Nate: That and steroids

Nick: It's universal.

Nate: That'd be awesome if bands used performance enhancing drugs and there were scandals and shit.

Sam: They call it "alcohol."

Nate: "I knew that guy couldn't solo like that legitimately."

Nick: "Nate, I've noticed you've been playing all downstrokes lately...."

Nate: Shaq's Twitter: "Is this true what I'm hearing about Banner Pilot... wat is da world comin' to?"





tiltwheel

INTERVIEW BY TODD TAYLOR

SPECIAL THANKS TO JEFF PROCTOR
PHOTOS BY TODD TAYLOR, SHANTY CHERYL, AND LISA WEISS
DESIGN BY LAUREN MEASURE

You may be thinking, "Wait a minute, dude. I thought bands could only be interviewed once in *Razorcake*. You totally interviewed Tiltwheel already." Nope. Believe it or not, we haven't. Oh, sure, I've interviewed Tiltwheel plenty, but never for the print version of *Razorcake*. And I think that's an indicator of where *Razorcake*'s head is. Here's a band that I flat-out love, that I have great access to, who are relevant, active, and down. When *Razorcake* started in 2001, I told lead singer and guitarist Davey that I'd want to interview them—merely as a convenient benchmark—when they'd finished their next full-length LP. I had no idea it would take over eight and half years (and counting). So when *Razorcake* turned fifty, I wanted to celebrate the milestone by driving down to San Diego for a couple of days and sitting down with one of my favorite bands. More than that, it gave me an excuse to visit friends I haven't

been seeing that much of lately. Tiltwheel built the pyramids. They've been around for twenty years. The copout to what they sound like is to imagine the best bits of Jawbreaker and Leatherface together: burlap-voiced, plainly worded poetics. Songs that have space and melody. But that's not quite right because the truth is uglier, more twisted. A lot of their songs' power comes from unmitigated self-loathing, suicidal thoughts, and a dark place that's awash in alcoholism. As the pyramids were arduously made by slave labor, were meticulously engineered, and took years to complete, so it seems to be with almost everything Tiltwheel is involved with. Without the slavery. Nothing ever seems to come out easily or breezily, but you can't deny the end results. That shit's tight.

But what's remarkable is that, like the pyramids, Tiltwheel's legacy over the years hasn't eroded into an anthill that's been

caved in by the stomping boots of passing time and indifference. Their songs, instead of crumbling under repeated listens or diminishing from catering to a specific genre that was popular at a given time, are these whole, honest, redemptive minutes of sound. They're full of belief and rage, solid as stone, sympathetic as a freshly cracked-open beer on a hot pyramid-making day. Every song adds presence and height to their already considerable weight.

To say that Tiltwheel is a trio is a bit of lie. Although it is true that, currently, three people are in the band making sound, Tiltwheel is also just as much an extended family. It's a family that includes all the previous members. It's also an international family in the hundreds; people who have formed long-term kinships with a band incapable of self-promotion but more than capable of coming to your town, playing to a small, devoted audience, then drinking all the alcohol in the immediate vicinity.

I can honestly say that *Razorcake* wouldn't be what it is without Tiltwheel. I first met them in 1998, after hanging out with Bob MacPherson, Tiltwheel's drummer at the time, after bonding over a mutual loathing of the band Goldfinger. Tiltwheel was one of the first bands that I felt an extreme loyalty to. They have a way of embracing the fucked-upedness of the world, etching out a small, ethical world, and then creating beautiful things inside of it.

Through my association with Tiltwheel, from being in the studio for a bit when they recorded *Hair Brained Scheme Addicts*, to tagging along on several tours, to just being in vocalist Davey Quinn's basement listening to records, watching laser discs, and drinking beer in the small pool, I was introduced to new worlds of music and musicians that was unfolding in present time. DIY bands are using this nation's freeways like arterial blood, pumping music into basements, backyards, and warehouses. Tiltwheel gave me intimate access to that world. That's something I'm forever grateful for.

Over the years, Davey Quinn has become a dear friend. This interview took place over a three-day span. Here is part one. Part two with Davey will run in issue #51.

Tiltwheel is:

Davey Quinn: Vocals, guitar
J. Wang: Vocals, bass
Paul Trash: drums

Todd: Were you in a youth hockey league team with John Reis of Rocket From The Crypt?

Davey: Not with John. Bill Lamb was there for a little bit, the last year. I played with Chris Chelios and his brother Steve. Chris Chelios is probably the greatest defenseman in the history of hockey. I don't know much about pro hockey, but there was a time when the Detroit Red Wings had bought the greatest players on the ice: Brett Hull... They had a line that rivaled The Four Horsemen.

Todd: So you did hockey with Chris Chelios?
Davey: With him, yeah. John didn't play youth hockey, but Mark Gariss was on my team and he was in Radio Wendy, too. Radio Wendy was "Rocket Jr." Three of the hockey dudes I played with went pro.



There's a friend of ours who hangs out with us every once in awhile. She played hockey when she was a kid. At the time—this was before Gretzky came to L.A.—we had enough one season for two lines, so our hockey team traveled. We had to go play Fresno because there was no other team in San Diego to play. We were the only team. After Gretzky joined The Kings, it blew up, but I didn't play after that.

Todd: When you were a little kid, what did you want to be?

Davey: The first thing I remember saying was I wanted to be a fireman.

Todd: Who was the first musician that you really liked and made you want to decide to play music? Not just liked and said, "Oh, they're awesome."

Davey: My sister raised me. She was fifteen when I was born. She loves music. I probably wanted to sing first, be a rock star. It's probably different because you didn't have that much of a visual representation of music. Not until 1975, right, when *Saturday Night Live* came on. At that time, we didn't even have cable then or nothing, but we could pick up *Eye on L.A.* I didn't see the first episode of *Saturday Night*

Live. My friend told me about it, so I ate broccoli so that my mom would let me watch *Saturday Night Live*. After that, here comes Don Kirshner.

I wouldn't be surprised if it was Slade. God, you know what? It was probably Paul Collins (*The Nerves*, *The Beat*). Seriously. They were playing "Don't Wait Up for Me Tonight" or something. The amazing thing about YouTube: "Fuck I saw that when I was a fuckin' kid. Holy shit. I remember this." So, to answer your question, I had a conversation with my boss today and he's like, "Yes or no answers." There are no yes or no answers. Okay, I remember really loving The Beach Boys. I know the answer to the question now. It would be Denny Laine from Wings. It has to be. It must be, 'cause, fuck, the guitars on that song "Jet" are so fucking good. I found the fuckin' record, too (*Band on the Run*). That might have been it. You know what? See, here's the thing, though. When I was a kid, my dad got me an H.R. Pufnstuf record for Christmas. I was really young. Inside the H.R. Pufnstuf record was Elvis's soundtrack from *Change of Habit*, which is a shitty movie. I think it has Mary Tyler Moore in it as a nun, and

KLAUS NOMI CHANGED EVERYTHING. THAT WAS THE MOST BEAUTIFUL, WEIRDEST FUCKIN' SHIT I'D EVER SEEN.

TODD TAYLOR

the song "Rubberneckin'" on that was probably my first real favorite song that I sang constantly and played all the fuckin' time, nonstop. [Singing in Elvis voice] "It's called rubberneckin', baby. That's all right with me. Yes it is, now!" Black singers in the background and shit.

When I was probably six or seven, probably Elvis, watching *American Bandstand*, seeing Gary Moore. Well, Gary Moore (Thin Lizzy) was probably later on. Gary Moore was the first motherfucker I saw who made me want to actually really make weird sounds with a guitar and be in a band, 'cause they would show "Waiting for an Alibi" on *America's Top 40* or Casey Kasem's show, 'cause I would watch that all the time. He would show a second of a video or two. Just last weekend, I was thinking of when he showed Prince's "I Wanna Be Your Lover" on there and it's just this horrible video of him against a blue screen dancing. What a great fuckin' song that is.

When I was younger, you didn't have the visual representation thing; so I didn't even know how to hold a tennis racket when I was really, really young. It's just a laundry list. It's impossible to pinpoint, but I would

probably say that Denny Laine, *Band on the Run*, Glenn Buxton from Alice Cooper, even though I had seen that horrible "Welcome to My Nightmare" video 'cause they showed it on *Midnight Special* or something like that. Or they showed it after *Donnie and Marie* because I'd watch *Donnie and Marie* nonstop. I don't know why. I think I really thought he was a little bit rock'n'roll. You know what? *Grand Ole Opry* show. June Carter. Fuck me. That was just the most incredible thing. *Soul Train*. *American Bandstand*. We're talking when I'm a little, little fuckin' kid.

Todd: Five, six, seven.

Davey: Seriously. Really small. I knew rock'n'roll. I knew these things. But once you start seeing this on TV—*Saturday Night Live*, I was eight years old. It was the first time I'd seen David Bowie and he had Klaus Nomi with him. I'll never forget when he did "I'm a Boy" and he's jumping around. And Klaus Nomi changed everything. That was the most beautiful, weirdest fuckin' shit I'd ever seen. They carried Bowie out in a plastic suit and start singing operatic. Fuck. *Urgh! A Music War* came out, like 1981, when I was thirteen. Fuck me. Nomi was on that.

Probably all that shit. The whole mix of everything. I wasn't much of a TV baby at all. 1982, 1983, when I went to go see The Who and there was a promo for MTV, which was going on the air the next morning. Got a sticker. "MTV music television. Turn it on." Woke up. "What's that?" It was Iggy Pop and then it was Siouxsie And The Banshees. I was all, "What the fuck is a Siouxsie And A Banshee?" I didn't see "Video Killed the Radio Star" (by The Buggles: the first video shown on MTV's national debut) or anything, but it was an hour and a half into the fuckin' thing. Blotto. Joe King Corosco. Those sorts of things were really cool. All those things together make you want to play music eventually.

They played Paul Collins on the radio in San Diego when I was a kid on KPRI. 99.9 and shit like that. Amazing stuff. It was crazy because all this shit was out at the same time as Led Zeppelin, but they kept playing Led Zeppelin nonstop. And, to this day, they won't play Paul Collins anymore, but they'll play Led Zeppelin, which I don't get. But it was heavy rotation. The Brat. You'd hear Heart, "Barracuda" or "Kick It Out," and then you'd hear Paul Collins. Great. Totally cool.

Todd: That world's gone now.

Davey: That world's on YouTube now. You're your own DJ, radio station. Honestly, you can sit there and do that all goddamn night and it's great. That's no different from MRR because it's user-provided shit. I mean, there is a little bit of corporate crap, but it's the fuckin' internet, so it doesn't get thrown in your face. It's not like, "Before you watch this video of Too Many Daves playing, we're going to make you watch a commercial for Taylor Hanson's new band." Or it's "Smell Yo' Dick," but they change it to "Smell Yo' Pop-Tarts" or some shit like that. So, it's cool. If I had the equipment, I would take some of these VHS tapes that I made when we finally entered the '80s and got a video cassette player or my sister's Betamax and upload *America's Top 40*. I can't watch 'em, but I've still got 'em.

Todd: Were you in a band that actually opened up The Casbah (a long-running San Diego club)?

Davey: Yeah. Friends Of No One. March 17th, 1989. That's my guess. That's the band with the Shitgiveits guys. The first band to play the Casbah on the first day was CLA and, I think, they played with the Rubburns. Dennis from CLA is my current boss at the bar. The following Tuesday, we played with Crankshaft (not the East L.A. one), which is Atom from Rocket's (RFTC) old band. We were there the first week. "Tim Mays just opened up a place that has music." And we're like, "Ten Dollar Tim opened up a



SHANTY CHERYL

place?" Me and one of the other dudes in the band were eighty-sixed from Tim's old place, the Pink Panther, for just being drunk and stupid all the time. I put a quarter on the pool table, stood on the pool table and said, "Fuck, this is my quarter. I can do what I want." Retarded. Whatever.

Todd: When and how did Tiltwheel start? I have a flyer that says Tues., February 9th, 1991 with Unwritten Law and Puzzlebox at the Texas Tea House.

Davey: There were two flyers. One was a flyer that I made that had the Sandman that said, "Bobby's parents don't know what his uncle did to him." And it says Unwritten Law and Tiltwheel. Then this flyer came out because Puzzlebox got added to the show because they were from Poway and I think they were friends with Unwritten Law.

Todd: But you were not the original singer of Tiltwheel.

Davey: No. Damon Way was.

Todd: Damon and Danny Way were in Tiltwheel.

Davey: Danny is Damon's brother. Damon ran Droors, Eight Ball, DC Shoes.

Todd: These are multi-million dollar people now.

Davey: Yeah, totally.

Todd: Huge skateboarding clothing and shoe companies.

Davey: Danny Way never ceases to amaze me.

Todd: Danny Way jumped the Great Wall of China.

Davey: On a skateboard.

Todd: And he landed it.

Davey: What I didn't get is: was he jumping into China or out of China? I saw him, too, jump out of a helicopter.

Todd: Fifteen or more feet above vert.

Davey: In the X Games or whatever shit it's called this year, we sat there at the bar, fuckin' floored by what he was doing. The guy's superhuman. He's amazing... His brother, Damon, got injured. Got punched in the back of the head.

Todd: At a show?

Davey: At school. Somebody with a lock around their knuckles. I didn't go to school with them. This is just a story. He ended up getting a lot of money because he was semi-paralyzed.

Todd: So they started Tiltwheel?

Davey: Damon started Tiltwheel. Damon and Bob McPherson, and Aaron Regan. They had a band and they were trying to get somebody to play music with them. They had tried Shane Carson's brothers and I was in a band with Shane's brother. And now my produce guy at the restaurant sees my pill (tattoo), "Oh, you know Carson? I grew up with those guys." San Diego's such a small town. Anyways, they had this band. I don't know if they had any songs. It could be the billion other bands I was trying to start when I was twelve, where we go and make noise and never play again. I don't know who played guitar for them if they had a guitar player.

Todd: The story I heard was that when you went in to record the first time, the singer didn't actually show up and that you started singing.

Davey: No. We had recorded.

Todd: What?

Davey: The first thing we recorded, someone had a 4-track. For all I know, Tim and Molly (Liquid Meat Records) had one. Who knows? So, we recorded six songs on that. Aaron, the bass player, his parents had a racquetball court in the backyard.

Todd: A full-blown court with a ceiling and a back wall?

Davey: A giant goddamn building in their backyard that had a racquetball court with a viewing area and everything.

Todd: Nuts.

Davey: It came with the house? Who knows? It's Escondido. You know how people have tennis courts in their back yards.

Todd: I've seen tennis courts, but I've never seen a racquetball court.

Davey: It's the same thing. It's just got a ceiling, not a green fence. I thought that that was a really big advantage because that means we could play anywhere and we'd be pretty tight because we practiced in the worst possible atmosphere you possibly could.

Todd: So much echo.

Davey: And it was crazy. That video, there's beer cans all over the goddamn floor. It's so fuckin' fun. We would play a song and Bob would go outside, right? "What's the motherfucker doing outside? Does he go out and have a cigarette?" I don't even think

"YOU GOT BEER? I LIKE BEER. LET ME HAVE A BEER!"

I smoked then. One time I went out there and he's sitting in the car drinking a beer. I was all, "You got beer? I like beer. Let me have a beer." He's all, "I didn't know if you drank or not." We'd been playing together for a month or two at that time. "And I'm not really sure if it's cool with Aaron's parents if we drink." I'm like, "Fuck you, man. We're twenty-one. We can drink. Let's go get some beer."

Todd: It's America!

Davey: Over with, man. Two weeks later, Aaron's all [in mopey voice], "My mom said we have to clean up all the beer cans and shit." There were five trash bags full of Meister Bräu cans. A racquetball court covered from front to back in a sea of beer cans and piled-up bags of beer cans. Fuckin' awesome.

Todd: Lit that fuse.

Davey: So, we recorded in a racquetball court. We may have had a name at that time. I don't know. So, then, we played that show at the Texas Tea House. So we have this demo. I have it. It's... interesting. We're working on a discography compilation and it's definitely going on there because, hey, you've got to be honest.

Todd: It's better to have it out front so you know where it is.

Davey: But it's fun to listen to. It really is.

Todd: Had you guys heard of Leatherface at this time?

Davey: I had heard of Leatherface at this time. I had *Mush* for a couple years and listened to it, literally, every fuckin' day. That and a Blowhole record, some Triple X Records thing. They were both very similar. Grumpy voice. Fast. Later on down the line, one day I'm like, "You know what? I've been listening to this record every day. I always put it on the background, just listen to it, and I've never actually *listened* to it. Then it just snapped. This is the fuckin' best record I've ever heard in my life. Everything about it is perfect.

Anyway, we recorded the demo, six songs. Bob didn't like it. But Bob was in a band that went up and recorded at South Coast Studios, and I think the guy was a Christian something, so he knew Bob a little bit. I guess Christians all know each other and stuff. So, we went up there and we recorded. That was the time when somebody had actually poked their head out, came out, and said, "Man, Damon sucks." He was having a lot of difficulty

singing. His heart was totally there, but I think he didn't have a way of getting it out right. But, you see, I don't care, 'cause I listen to crappy music sometimes, so it doesn't matter. We recorded that, the same six songs that's on the 4-track, just recorded a little better quality and, I think, there's lyrics. We had two more songs. This thing called "New Girl," and "Eight and a Half." All of our songs were "One," "Two," "Three," "Four," "Five," "Six," "Seven," "Eight." We had numbers for all the songs. "All right, let's do number Four." And it was easy because when you play a show, you'd be like, "Play 'Two.'" Play "Eight." Well, "Eight,"; I ended up trying to write another song and we ended up putting it in front of it and changing "Eight" to "Eight and a Half." So, we went to Double Time and recorded those two songs. It turned out really good, then Damon sent that off to Plan B for that video (*Virtual Reality*) because he was in with the skater dudes. I don't skate, but we were a skate band for awhile.

Todd: Skate-friendly.

Davey: Very skate-friendly. We're no Frontside Five or McRad, but I guess we were a skate band because of that. It was cool. So, then we started doing the label thing (Liquid Meat) with Tim and Molly. We had put out that Rust.

Todd: You were involved with the running of Liquid Meat?

Davey: Yeah. We were all at school together, so I know I definitely heard Leatherface. That's where I got it from: working at the radio station there. So we had this label, we started to do it. It was the greatest shit in the world. And I'll say it right out front—I'm not slagging Tim and Molly in any way—they're all, "What bands do you want to put out?" I'm like, "I'd really love to put out this Unwritten Law because I have a demo of theirs and it's great. It's really cool. It sounds like a good Pennywise." I'd seen 'em live and they were fuckin' great and a lot of fun. The kids really liked 'em. "I want to do that. And that band Blink (who became Blink 182), that guy who comes in all the time. We should put out a record for them." "Oh, no, no, no. We like this band Rust." And, Rust, they had no idea—that's John Hogan's band, John and Pat from Santa Cruz skateboards and all that shit. They were all friends of Gator. So, it was kinda

cool. There was a little family connection there. Rust got signed to a major but that didn't increase sales for us because I still have seven hundred of those motherfuckin' records collecting dust in Escondido. There was the signing frenzy thing going on in San Diego. I think Tim and Molly might have been trying to cash in on that. But I wanted to call John Reis and do a *Rocket (From The Crypt) 7"*. They put out sixty fuckin' 7"s. He totally would have done one with us, I bet. We should have put out a Blink record. Probably still be a label today.

Todd: Wasn't one of the guys in Blink in Tiltwheel for a little bit.

Davey: Yeah. Tom DeLonge. So, Tim and Molly, are like, "All right. Let's do a CD." We actually shot the cover for *Volume*—we wanted to put out a comp of San Diego bands. I wanted to do Mario's (Rubalcaba) band and Boilemaker. Mario actually played with Tiltwheel for awhile. The rest of Tiltwheel had talked about getting another guitar player, so we had a big, long line of other guitar players.

Todd: Like Chris Squire.

Davey: Yeah, that's later though. This is when Damon was still around. Damon was the singer and I had never led a band before. So, one day, we're sitting at Aaron's house and there's no Damon. Damon had this girlfriend at the time, which was a foreign concept to the rest of us. Didn't show up. Kept calling, calling, and calling. And then Aaron finally called him. [In mopey voice] "Oh, I'm hanging out with my girlfriend." Aaron gets pissed and takes off. Aaron had a short temper. He got mad and he walks out. I remember walking up to the house and he comes back and he's all, "I just kicked Damon out of the band." And Bob's all, "What? Really?" I'm like, "Fuck. Really? Crazy. Who's going to sing?" And Aaron looks at me and goes, "You are." [Exhales deeply.] "All right. Let's go," you know.

So we're in the studio and I'm writing lyrics to songs that we already had. I had never written a lyric that wasn't a joke about a friend of mine. Me and my friends, who's actually at the bar (*Hamilton's*) right now, and my friend, Marty. Marty had a 4-track. We played music and we made fun of our friends. It was the best shit in the world. It's fuckin' hilarious. We never actually played real instruments. We had a drum machine and plugged our guitars into a 4-track through a pedal. Never even had an amp. That shit was great.

So, I'm sitting there. [In frustrated voice] "I'm trying to fuckin' write lyrics." I had no idea how to sing or anything like that. And that's all the *Volume* stuff. Most of it's first take and just drenched in reverb. That song "Seven," I rewrote the lyrics for that and that became "Jill's the Best." But the original version of it had these great goddamn lyrics about going through the trees and rustling in the leaves. Fuckin' amazing. Really fuckin' cool shit.

Todd: I don't know if this is out of sequence...

Davey: Everything is.



TODD TAYLOR

Todd: ...but the Tiltwheel van. Did you buy it from a church?

Davey: That van? [Points to the van parked outside.] I had packed up a guitar, a couple pairs of socks and shirts and moved to Texas one day.

Todd: And you moved to Texas because...

Davey: Mark (Shaw) and Kris (Pierce) were out there. Mostly, I was fed up with San Diego. I kinda liked a girl out there a little bit.

Todd: And Mark and Kris, at the time, were the touring version of Tiltwheel.

Davey: The only reason for that is: We booked a tour, Bob called that night, said he couldn't go. I was an hour away from leaving, to go pick him up, just lagging as usual, to go drive out to Texas for the first show. I'm all, "Fuck you" and hung up the phone. I had met Mark, stayed at his house when I was in Everready. The first time I met him, he was in Supergirls, and Everready played with him in Boston in the basement of a grocery store. That's where I met Al Quint (*Suburban Voice*) and Ellen, his wife, the first time, too. It was fuckin'

rad. "I read your fuckin' zine in school. Fuck, you're amazing. Wow." In Boston for the first time. Twenty, twenty-one years old. We whipped back around, stayed at Mark's. I finally got Bob on the phone. You can tell when Bob's going to flake on you because he doesn't answer his phone. You know the motherfucker's home because that's what he does. He stays at home. He drinks his beer like a champ, plays video games. This dude is beautiful.

Todd: Clockwork.

Davey: Clockwork beautiful. I know if he ain't answering the phone, he don't want to talk to nobody and there's a reason. Finally got it. So, then I called Jeff from The Kids (CA, not the Belgian band). "Jeff, fuck, Bob's not going on tour. I'm leaving in an hour. Want to go on tour?" He's all, "Fuck, no." "All right, cool." Called Brian (of Everready). "Brian, I need Brett's number. See if he wants to go on tour." [Looking at the muted television] Wow, there's a kid vagina right there. [laughs] Fuckin' gross, man. Shit's all bald like one of them *Hustler* chicks. [long pause] Fuckin' haunting.

This was before cell phones, right. Brian's all, "Why don't you call Mark?" Called Mark, "Hey Mark, Bob's not going on tour. Do you want to play drums and go on tour with us for two months?" And Mark's all, "Yeah. Okay." I'm all, "I'll be there between fourteen and eighteen hours. See you in a few. Leaving now, Mark." "C'mon over." He had no fuckin' idea. I had no fuckin' clue. I'm desperate. I never, ever put a thought into anything other than, "This is punk and this is how punk works." Getting shit done. Not talking shit.

Todd: "I really have no solid plans."

Davey: "I'll call you when I get there to ask directions." Ross (bass player) and I piled in the van, fucked off to Texas, and then met up with Mark. We practiced and we missed only one show of the entire tour. The second time around, Ross didn't want to go on tour. He's all, "Just get Kris Pierce." I had seen Kid Chaos, but I didn't know Kris. That was diving into really crazy waters. That's creepy hired hand Chuck Berry shit. You can interpret it that way and I did. But, I don't care. It's punk rock. People had bent over backwards to book a show.

Without sounding like a total dick, it really is a lot harder and a lot cooler for somebody to answer a phone and say, "Yeah, I'll let your band play here in my house and then give you money so that you can go to the next town and do the same thing. And I'll probably feed you and let you sleep on my floor." That, to me, is way more difficult than going like, "I'm taking fuckin' two weeks off, going on tour. I'm quitting my shitty job." There's no effort involved. There really isn't. I don't care how many fuckin' people say otherwise. Sure, there's loneliness, there's problems, there's boredom. But their effort level, you're a fuckin' bum asking for change. That doesn't take any brains. And that's all touring bands are, anyway. Just a bunch of fuckin' scraggles. That's it... I don't even remember what question you asked me.

Todd: The van. Did you buy it from a church?

Davey: God, I talk a lot. So, anyway, I moved out to Texas. I was working with Mark and this dude Ken and we were laying data lines at a Hyatt or a Hilton. We needed a van 'cause I was in Texas and we had a tour two days from then. Mark has this problem with actually securing things like that. It's not a problem, but in the same way that Mark will say, "Yeah, no problem," sometimes, it becomes a problem. Which isn't a big deal. It happens to me, too.

We test the system. We hook up the network. Everything's blinking. "Cool. I'm going to try to go on the internet." Maybe there was a precursor to Craigslist that was around. It said, "Van. Low mileage. Eight thousand dollars." Call up. Went. Talked to my momma. "I need you to co-sign." Put five hundred dollars down. "You want to take it for a test drive?" "Actually, no. Would you mind if we just sat in it with the engine running and the a/c on?" "What?" "Well, we're going to be sleeping in this

DISCHARGE

Todd: Davey, you played for Discharge, right?

Davey: Yes.

Todd: Want to explain that a little bit?

Davey: I'm going to bum out all these fuckin' peace punks who I respect and love. Okay, what's the question?

Todd: So you played for Discharge?

Davey: Yep. I ended up in Discharge. I love Discharge. I am probably vegetarian because of anarcho peace punk: anti-racist, anti-fascist, everything.

Todd: Anti-vivisection.

Davey: They weren't even into that shit. They weren't fuckin' vegetarians or anything like that. But they talked about the same things that I fuckin' feared when I was child, which, "Now in darkness, world stops turning," when Ozzy says it, it means something else to me. When Cal says it, it's like, wow. That is the end result of Cold War and the power that nations yield. These are nations, not nations of people, but nations of politicians.

Todd: Politics.

Davey: I wouldn't even call it politics, because politics, to me, just the word, implied *quid pro quo*, solving problems and working to oil the machine, not to make the machine that destroys the other machine. So, Discharge said it and it just reminded me of all this shit when I was a kid. Those fuckin' missiles on TV, war, propaganda shit that, to this day, we still have to listen to and it scares the fuck out of me. Discharge were really powerful and I love 'em. I got the opportunity to drive them on the West Coast because I was driving bands around. Pulled up to the airport and there's three of them and Stefan Schlumpf, a crazy fuckin' German dude who drives bands around in Europe and drives a couple of bands around over here. I met him when Oxymoron was on tour in Europe. "Alright, where's Rainey?" They're like, "He got pulled at customs for a weapons charge." I'm like, "Let's go practice." They're like, "What?" I'm like, "I know all your fuckin' songs. Let's go find a place to practice." Schlumpf's all, "Davey did this for Oxymoron. He's good. He can play, I think."

Here comes me, a big, fat Yankee. 'Cause I'm a driver and guess what drivers do? Drivers drink coffee and take pills and

thing a lot." So Mark and I sat in there. Went across the street to get beer. We sat in the van for twenty minutes with the a/c on and the engine running, in Texas, and we're like, "It's pretty good, man. It's comfortable." And the guy's all, "Do you want to take it for a test drive?" "It's cool. We'll keep it." Seriously, we sat in the van and relaxed and that's how we decided on the van. We did drive it around the block, though.

Todd: So you did buy it from a church?

Davey: It came from a church. Because we were like, "Why does it have twelve thousand miles on it and it's ten years old?" He's all,

drink too much and talk shit and won't shut up and snore and annoy everybody. So we went to this place with these weird punk dudes. They were nice, but punk dudes can sometimes be sketchy and scary. We went up, I strapped on a bass, and was like, "What songs are we playing?" They were like, "Do you know 'Fight Back'?" "All right. Cool." [Makes bass playing sounds.]

There's punk Rainy, Dee Dee Ramone, and Mike Watt for punk rock bass players, but I can't play like Mike Watt. But I can play like Rainy and Dee Dee. So that was easy as fuck. I got along great with Bones, not Terry Bones but Tezz. Rat was really cool. I had toured with Skeptix three or four times, right, and will continue to tour with them if they come back over. Those guys are family. But Fish, from Skeptix, he's the guitar player on *Grave New World*. I got the Discharge gig because he still talks to Discharge and he actually puts out their records over there. He and I were joking around. "Davey, how'd you like Discharge?" We were in the same band with not one single of the same person in the band. He was in Discharge with Rainy, Gary, Cal, and Blackie and I was in with Terry, Tezz, and Rat.

Played shows here. It was really cool. They were like, "Get your plane ticket. We're going out to New York." Did that part of the tour. It was cool. I was still considered the driver even though I was playing bass for them. They were like, "Oh, man, you saved the tour." I'm all, "Don't talk like that. I'm having a great time. This is cool." And then, at the end of the tour, Terry's all, "I think it would be a great opportunity. If I were you, I'd be kinda proud to being saying I played in Discharge and go on tour. I've been playing in bands since 1984," and blah, blah, blah. And I said, "I've been playing in bands since 1984, motherfucker, and I tour more than you do, so don't give me this fuckin' 'opportunity' shit. Pay my motherfuckin' ass." There is a fine line. I am a punk rock dude who eats Taco goddamn Bell on tour and dollar menu shit because you're skint poor. I play to get paid twenty dollars at a show and I'm fuckin' happy with it. Then you have these bands that are just suckin' up the fuckin' money and playing, going through the motions, and



collecting their \$3,500 a night. If you're going to do that, and all these kids believe in that shit, it's so weird, man.

Maybe I'm an anti-elitist or something like that, but I like a more organic style of doing things. High ticket prices and high guarantees versus just having a great goddamn time. We are going to get drunk with these three people at the show. It's awesome. Everready played a show in Detroit and there was three people. One guy had to go to hockey practice, so he just came in to buy merch. There was a blonde-haired girl and another person in the place. That girl came up to us afterwards and goes, "Hey, I just called my parents and they said it's cool if you guys stayed at our house. Don't worry. My parents are really cool." And she was like fourteen." We're all, "We don't know anybody here. We need a place to crash." I stayed in the van because I'm afraid of old people. Still am. When I go to my kid's school, parent/teacher shit, I'm fucking afraid of these people. I go to her school and if somebody looks at me funny and has got a really nice head of hair, fuck that, man. That's evil shit.

So I stayed in the van. Brian and Brett come out the next morning. First, Brian's all, "Dude, we totally fucked that chick." I'm like, "Yeah, right." "No, her dad had a Saccharine Trust tattoo and was talking to us about L.A. punk. The mom was really cool. Kinda like a goth-y lady." The kid was a cute little blonde-haired girl, no boobies with freckles. "And her mom gave us cookies and the dad smoked us out. He had all these rad punk records. Talked to us about Stiff Little Fingers for three hours." So, totally cool.

"It belonged to this church." There was a lot of rust and shit on the undercarriage and, I guess, it had been sitting. The tires were not in the best condition. Sometimes, when cars sit for awhile, the tires get flat on one side. Jesus shone his light upon us, so he sayeth, with his gift of love... and vans.

Todd: Was there any blood in the van?

Davey: There's a stain.

Todd: Oh, no.

Davey: On one of the seats and it looks like it had been bleached out pretty good but not quite all the way.

Todd: On the ceiling?

Davey: Yeah.

Todd: So someone committed suicide in it?

Davey: I see a stain on the ceiling of a van that sat there for ten years in church, twelve thousand miles on it. I'm like, "Nobody wants to drive in that van." We can take pictures of the stain tomorrow if you want.

Todd: So, other stains in the van... Don't you shit your pants a lot on tour?

Davey: Yes, I do.

Todd: Explain that.

Davey: It started in Everready. Just shit my pants three times on tour.

Todd: Just from being too drunk or too tired?



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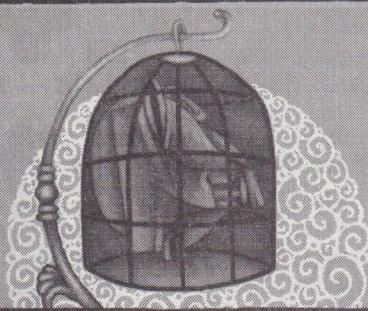
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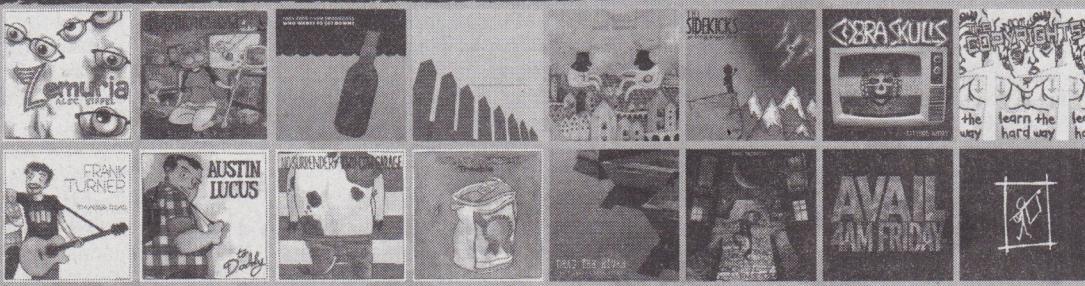
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JESUS SHONE HIS LIGHT UPON US, SO HE SAYETH, WITH HIS GIFT OF LOVE AND VANS.

LISA WEISS

Davey: You know what? I drink a lot. I don't know if you know that, but I drink a lot. Sometimes, you cough or you sneeze and something pops out.

Todd: Sploosh. Blort.

Davey: So that's what happens.

Todd: I didn't know if was a ritual or anything.

Davey: Oh, no. It's not like we're trying to do it. "Oh cool. Can't leave until we shit our pants." The last tour we did, I did not shit my pants and it was amazing. J. was like, "Did you shit your pants yet?" I'm all, "No, I haven't. Don't fuckin' ruin it, dude." It was great. Frank's (Frankie Stubbs, Leatherface) cool with it now, but I really, really, loved finding out from Yoichi (Snuffy Smiles Records) that Mr. Stubbs has a similar problem. [laughs] Fuck, that's amazing. We're all just regular-assed people who shit our pants on occasion.

But it is; it's the drinking. What you shit in your pants—it's a big, long line of beer-colored oily stuff. And, unfortunately, it happens the day you put on new pants for the first time, right when you start your day. I can always tell. Ask J. Ask anybody. Brian used to get so pissed off at me, 'cause I'd be like, "All right, it's going to be one of those days" and literally have to stop and shit every twenty miles for at least two hours. That's when I became—and you saw that—an aficionado of the truck stop bathroom because if we go to a place where nine people can shit at the same time and look at racist shit from truckers written on the stalls and all that suckin' dick at twelve o'clock shit—much better.

Todd: Because Bob had quit Tiltwheel several times, what was the thing that broke Bob? Bob was a founding member.

Davey: He was there before I was. I'm the fraud. I'm like the bass player from The Vandals. (Referring to the only original member of The Vandals, Joe Escalante carried the band's name after all of the other members left.) I'm the keyboard player from Foghat. Seriously, dude. You know how critical of that shit I am.

Todd: You're not like Foghat, though.

Davey: Yes. But we should have changed our name or something like that. Who knows? [On the TV flashes Robert Oppenheimer, father of the nuclear bomb.] If there's



anybody who should have been fuckin' killed at birth, it was Oppenheimer.

Todd: So what broke Bob?

Davey: Why'd he finally quit? You'd have to ask him. Bob did say to me, "When Ross quit"—this will kill people's hearts—"Tiltwheel, we should have broke up." We should have. It was pointless after that. Bob and I loved Ross and we love Ross to this day, so much, in fact, that we are going to start our own band together. People want it to be Tiltwheel. If I put my thirty cents in, I'm going to say it's not Tiltwheel. It's going to be exactly what we want to do and there's no hierarchy. One of Ross's faults is that he tended to put a hierarchy on us to where I would hear the phrase, "It's your band." Bob did that a couple times, too. It's not my band. It's a band. Define the fucking word "band." It's us. We're all one equal part of the same thing. Just because Bob doesn't play guitar doesn't mean that he doesn't write the songs, 'cause he does. He writes the songs just as much as I do or just as much as Ross did. It killed us. Ross left under really bad terms.

When Bob was told us that he was putting his two weeks in with us, he'd met the girl. Aaron was the same way. Lenny (bassist), they met the girl. Lenny had a baby with her and couldn't go on tour and stuff like that. That's one element. 'Cause I'd brought up, "Why are you quitting? Do you hate me? I know we should have broken up after Jarrod died." He's all, "We should

have broken up after Ross quit." And I said, "I know, I know." I agree. Am I glad that we didn't break up? Fuck yeah, man. I fuckin' love this shit. If we had broken up instead of Bob quitting, we, probably, would have got back together in a week or month or two. Or, like this, in a year or two. So Bob quit Tiltwheel. "So, what are you doing tonight, Bob?" "I don't know. Want to come drink beer?" "All right. Cool."

I felt a little weird at first. I wouldn't talk about what the band was doing, but Bob's interested because he holds just as much currency, to this day, that me, J., and Paul do. And I still feel the same way about Aaron, Damon, and everybody else who sets foot in this stupid band. Everybody holds an equal part and it's really true.

Todd: Was there a defining time when you guys were going to play and you went to three different places in one night? And every time, before you guys got to play, the cops came, Bob had to break his kit down and get back in the van?

Davey: That was something that is expected. That was Fourth of July, when, traditionally, our thing is to go play as many parties as we can and who cares if the cops break it up? Maybe Bob had been out too long that day. If that was the day, if that was the thing, then he hung on for a lot longer than that.

Todd: So, that Fourth of July, is that the day that you pissed inside of a cop car?

Davey: Uh huh. Apparently, the girl whose house we went to, the wrong party house, is

THERE'S A DIFFERENCE BETWEEN YOU HAVE NOTHING ELSE TO DO YOU DON'T WANT



TODD TAYLOR

now a film producer and an actress and her production company is called Wrong Party Productions.

Todd: How did you become a driver and sound man for fashion punk bands?

Davey: "Fashion punks" is a term that I heard in Japan. All the kids that we know in Japan wear T-shirts and you go into the park and there's charged motherfuckers with spikes and they look crazy. "Whoah, man, what's up? Where do those punks go?" [in Japanese accent] "Those aren't the punks. They're fashion punks. They don't even know music."

Todd: For those guys, you can see some seriously confusing flair (band patches, buttons, butt flap). Can you think of the most egregious use of flair?

Davey: Fuckin' Daniel James (Chinese Telephones, Daniel James Gang) wearing a Negative Approach shirt. I wanted to rip it off his fuckin' back because he was talking to me about how good Led Zeppelin was. I was all, "You take that Negative Approach shirt off or I will beat you." It's sort of opposite of what you were looking for. Do I give away Martin from Oxymoron—because he was broke—having me buy him a Nelly Furtado CD because he really, really liked it? [Todd laughs.] He ended up quitting. "Play that song again, Davey." Then he flew away two days later.

Todd: So how did you bum out a bunch of punks at the Holidays In The Sun festival in New Jersey?

Davey: By being there. Okay, the festival, it's on the beach, and it was beautiful. We're playing. It's punk. Street punk and stuff. I was looking out there. I had been drinking since six in the morning. It was four in the afternoon. I was like, "Man, it's beautiful out there. Look behind you, everybody. It's the most beautiful thing in the world. I wish you all could see this."

Todd: Did they boo you?

Davey: They seemed disinterested. I mean, c'mon. You wield the power.

Todd: "I wanna see the biggest mosh pit this place has ever seen!"

Davey: Yeah. "Fuckin' circle pit. Woo!" Literally, you can yell the name of the town you're in and people will cheer for it. And you know with the punks, they're all, "I can't wait to get the fuck out of this town." I never understood that. "Fuckin' great to be here in South Bend, Indiana. Fuckin' best goddamn place in the wooooorld! Woo!" You know? I guess it's not that punk.

Todd: Loving nature?

Davey: New Jersey's beautiful, man.

Todd: What band were you playing in when this happened? It wasn't Tiltwheel.

Davey: That was Oxymoron.

Todd: How did your month of burritos go?

Davey: I missed two days of burrito month.

Todd: What month was it?

Davey: Burrito month. The idea is to eat a burrito at a different taco shop every day for a month. If I chose a different path in life, it's really easy to do. It's kinda hard if

you're vegetarian. I know my taco shops. One of my cooks, his family owns fifteen of the best taco shops in San Diego. "My uncle opened Roberto's." I'm like, "Why do you work here and why don't you live in Mexico?" He's all, "I like it. It's fun." Anyway, we did burrito month. I tried to get everybody else to do it. We get a 50MB website, a free website. It's still up there. www.50megs/burritomonth or something like that. I started writing a blog and I wanted to do a zine. Every day, I went and took a photo of the taco shop. I ordered a burrito. I ate it. It was the only thing I ate all day. And I went to a different taco shop every day during the month of December.

I was getting worried that I couldn't find a place opened on Christmas, plus my mom likes to cook dinner. Goddamn it, I have to eat Christmas dinner. I cheated that day only because I woke up and got a breakfast burrito from the shop that was open, but then ate dinner. But I missed New Years because we went out and partied and I had my final New Years burrito after midnight. I missed the day after Christmas because, traditionally, we hang out and go shopping. The family thing, we all get together. "Is there anything we fucked up on or anything you don't want or something you wanted and couldn't get? Let's all go buy it." Or, "We have money from Christmas. Let's go buy ourselves something." Then we usually take in a movie or go get Thai food or something. We're like the Irish-Jewish except we get Thai food instead of Chinese food.

Todd: What was your favorite burrito?

Davey: During burrito month?

Todd: Yeah.

Davey: Probably from Mariachi's. I held off on Mariachi's. I wanted to do Mariachi's on Christmas because, living up in Escondido, that was my favorite place. When I got to Mariachi's, I was so fucking happy because I had some of the worst goddamn burritos in the world. It might be sort of like doing a zine, like doing your first issue. Ultimately, if you don't finish it, nobody's going to give a fuck. And if I don't finish *Burrito Month* and I don't come out with a perfect thirty-one day score, then who gives a fuck? I held off on Mariachi's because that would have been the first choice, knowing how important Mariachi's is.

Todd: Would you consider yourself a burrito ambassador? Didn't you introduce David Lowery from Cracker and Camper Van Beethoven ...

PLAYING MUSIC BECAUSE AND PLAYING MUSIC BECAUSE TO DO ANYTHING ELSE.

Davey: Yeah, but there wasn't a billion fuckin' burrito shops then, so it was very special at the time. Cracker was playing and they were playing with The Levellers. The Dickies might have played a week before and I bought Stu and Leonard a fuckin' burrito. But with David Lowery, I was like, "Dude, you have to fuckin' try a carne asada burrito." He loved it.

Todd: Who's Dan Sherman?

Davey: C'mon, dude. Dan Sherman is my insurance heterosexual life partner. Dan Sherman is a clumsy person who happens to get injured a lot and has run-ins with the police. Dan Sherman doesn't hang out much, but when Dan Sherman hangs out, there's a doctor or a cop around.

Todd: Understood.

Davey: Dan Sherman owes a lot of money to a lot of motherfuckin' people. Dan Sherman is in debt. [Laughs] I remember this one time when Dan Sherman was hanging out in Spring Valley. Dan and his friend were on the lawn, teaching their dogs to sieg heil. Nothing to do with Nazism, mind you. Just thought it was funny. At six in the morning. Believe it or not, *Hear Nothing, See Nothing, Say Nothing* (Discharge's first album) is blasting, and when I say blasting, you can, literally, hear every note down the block. Louder than if it was in your roommate's bedroom and your door was closed. The speakers that Dan Sherman's friend had were stolen from Polytechnic High in Hollywood and they were like homemade PA speakers. Wasted out of their fucking gourds. The band they had invited to the house had just gotten pissed off because they were partying so much and left. This is the same night me and my friend Todd, before Dan Sherman came around, were partying, running around in circles, jumping on couches. I went to pick up a beer and drank it and there was a cigarette butt in it, so I ran out the back door, started puking. Todd ran out the back door and started puking. Then my dog comes out the back door, starts puking. Then Todd's dog starts puking. The four of us—me, Todd, and our two dogs—are in the back yard puking at the same time and trying not to laugh our fucking asses off because we're puking at the same time.

All of sudden, here come the cops. The cop's all, "What your name?" And my friend Joe Blow says, "Joe." "Well, what's your last name?" "Blow." The cop looks

at the other dude and goes, "What's your name?" "Dan Sherman." The cop goes, "Is that your real name?" He goes, "Sure, man." [Laughs] The fucking cops shakes his head, gets in his car, and drives off. He's all, "I'm not getting anywhere with these fucking guys." That's how you deal with cops.

Seriously, if I was a cop—a cop had actually told me once before... I'm speeding. I'm going ninety miles an hour. They go, "You know how fast you were going?" "Ninety." And they're like, "You know what? It sounds like you know what you're doing." Ever since then, that's what I do when a cop pulls me over. They're all, "You know why I pulled you over?" "Yeah. Because I made an illegal right hand turn, peeled out, and I'm drinking."

Mark and I got pulled over in Texas one night. We had this kid Greg, huge mohawk. We were on tour with Skeptix, but they were sleeping and we were partying. We are fucking wasted. Mark opens the door to the van; beer cans pile out. Mark's all, "Hey, you're from Hearst." The cop lady's all, "Yeah." He's all, "My Mom's Linda. Is that the camera in the car? Is that little red light a camera?" She's all, "Yeah." "Mind if we take some pictures?" With the cop. It's like it's some Will Farrell movie, right? She looks at Greg's hair. He's got a charged-ass mohawk. "Holy shit! Look at your hair." We're like, "Ain't it crazy?" We're taking pictures with the cop in front of the camera, beer cans pouring out. She's all, "You guys are fine. Go home. Get off the streets, for crying out loud." It's great that shit like that happens to our friends. That's how you deal with cops. They came from a vagina as well.

That show got broken up the other night and Corey's band Breaker Breaker One Niner played and one of the cops was like, "Where do you guys play at?" The guy's lying to the cop. And the cop's all, "Really, 'cause I'm going to check it out. I thought you guys were great." I'm all, "Tell him where you really play because he actually likes your band." You get to be our age (late thirties, early forties) and the cops are younger than you.

Todd: Speaking about how to deal with cops. It was punk rock bowling. We were kitty corner to Sam's Town. It was either a closed or abandoned garage.

Davey: Oh yeah. Across the street. There's a strip mall there now.

Todd: If I remember correctly, you had twelve-pack cases on your feet.

Davey: Thirty packs.

Todd: Vena Cava played.

Davey: Dukes (of Hillsborough) played. They were doing three-song rallies.

Todd: Waiting to get shut down.

Davey: Tapping power out of a closed place. We're across the street from a casino and there's houses behind there, too. Residential. There were kids jumping on the trampoline and shit.

Todd: Looking over a cinder block wall.

Davey: And we're peeing and going off and going crazy. Just having a show. We know what we're doing. We know it's wrong.

Todd: It's not wrong.

Davey: We know that somebody doesn't want us to do that.

Todd: Society has its checks and balances.

Davey: Apparently, [faux conspiratorially] music is something that should stay in the home, like gay sex. Vena Cava played, so, of course, we're talking about gay sex. We're rockin' out, having a great time. But those shows, you ever notice that you want to die sometimes during the day and then your friends' bands are playing. Slowly but surely, three songs in, you're like, "Oh my god. I just drank a bunch of beer and I'm having the best time of my life." There's a photo of it. This lady cop showed up. This was the second time we'd been busted by them in two years and I'd become the ambassador. You want me to be the burrito ambassador? I'm the ambassador of let's fuckin' hang out and party in the parking lot. So the cops come up and I walk up. I have two open beers in my jacket pocket. Thirty pack cases in lieu of shoes. And the beer's spilling out of my jacket, all over the place; all over my pants. I think I have a twelve pack on my head, too.

Todd: You did.

Davey: "It's okay. We've got it under control." It was the same sort of shit. She was like, "Just shut it down," and fucked off. I'm not going to cause anybody harm. Sometimes it gets funny because I tend to push the envelope. I think the other week, when the cops showed up to the party, I was like, "I know my rights, motherfucker... just fuckin' with you. I'm sure you've heard that one before." [Laughs] I want that to be the new joke, 'cause when cops break up parties, now everybody's, "Want a beer, bro?" That ain't funny anymore. They're



TODD TAYLOR

not going to say, "If I didn't have a badge and a gun, I would totally party with you guys right now." You don't want to hear the same joke over and over. I try to come up with new jokes for cops. Honestly, it's the moments when you're not thinking.

With the peeing in the cop car thing. Yes. Let's talk conspiracy theory for a second. If we are all able to be tracked, I could probably get myself an agent, an internet-Hollywood agent, like a YouTube agent. Hey, cops, I know you've got everything I've done on tape, especially all the shit I've done in cop cars and getting pulled over. They've got cameras on that shit. "Can you please bring up my fuckin' file and give me a DVD of that shit? Here's my name and my social and I promise not to distribute this." Could we use something like that to our advantage? I'm going to have 'em send me a DVD of all the crazy shit of some drunken, fat guy going, "Okay, guys. It's cool."

Todd: Let's talk about getting arrested in Florida, then.

Davey: I didn't get arrested in Florida.

Todd: Did you get detained?

Davey: Oh, goddamn it. This is Fest 1 because this all happened at The Purple Porpoise. So, we're playing. It's a great show. What a great fuckin' time. We had been on tour, then we went back to Texas and then hung out for five days, then drove back to Florida. Michael was with us.

Todd: Mike Pack (Jack Palance Band, Future Virgins).

Davey: This is directly related to the poo story. (See "Shit Stain High Five" sidebar)

in the Future Virgin's interview, *Razorcake* #41.) We had dropped off Mike. He was having some girl problems. Played this place. Beltones. Rockin' out. We're having fun. You know how Tony (Weinbender, Fest organizer) puts a keg of beer in the club for the band? Well, they put the keg in the back so you didn't have to go to the bar. I don't even know if there was a bar at the Purple Porpoise. We got fuckin' wasted off this keg. It was mostly Mark and me and Billy Beltone and Rob Sessions. Do this Pete Townsend kick and my pants rip, but I'm wasted and we go and party.

Todd: You're ventilated.

Davey: I'd shit my pants on the way there, so I didn't have any underwears. [Todd laughs.] We're partying, partying, partying. Mark ended up going into the ghetto. We were parked at the compound. We played a show later that night. Four-thirty, five in the morning. It was horrible; embarrassing to be awake at that sort of hour after doing all the shit we did. But, we're out front. Laura, Darren's wife, is skating around. She's like this smiling, upright angel. We're all wasted. It's light out. There's people going to church. It's Sunday. It wasn't set in stone, like Fest is now, and here comes Mark with a keg of beer that he had pilfered off of some gangsters, because the compound was in this proverbial "shady part of Gainesville," which is like a three block area, apparently, across from Leonardo's By The Slice. Nobody would take me there, so I couldn't tell you if it was a ghetto. Midwestern white kids and college kids are afraid of this three-block area.

Party, party, party. Everything's over. Keg runs out. We get sick of hanging out with the two local fat dudes who don't know what the fuck we're all about. Fast forward and I wake up in the van at Chris Wppard's (Hot Water Music, Chris Wppard And The Ship Thieves) house with Bobbie or Russ or somebody like that sleeping in the van, too. I wake up to a phone call and it's Jimmy "The Truth" Wysolmierski (Panthro UK United 13), and he's all, "Hey, man. I've got your keys and I'm bailing out. I'm going back to my dad's. Where you at?" I get out of the van, totally wasted, take a piss. I'm on a cell phone—now we're fast forwarding to where punks have cell phones—then I go sit on a bus bench. "I'm at the corner of Northwest 7th Place and some other street." So I'm sitting on this bus bench, pretty much wasted, and The Truth pulls up and gives me the keys.

I take the keys and I start walking back to the house, which is a block away. They live in a cul-de-sac type thing. I notice half way there that my dick's hanging out of my pants and my pants are all ripped up. "Oh, fuck, I did that Pete Townsend shit last night." So, I go grab my backpack with my two shirts and my pair of other pants, go in the bathroom, change my pants, come outside, and Wppard's standing there. "There's two cop cars." No fucking clue what's going on, whatsoever. I'm still totally fuckin' wasted. I throw my bag in the back of Bill's truck and I'm sitting there, talking to the cop. "What did you do today?" I'm like, "My friend got a keg of beer and we drank it and we skated

• PROpagandhi

Todd: So tell me about your experience with Propagandhi.

Davey: What is this? Talk shit about bands day?

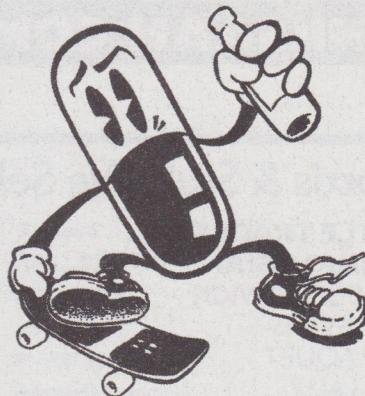
Todd: You just said nice things about The Partisans.

Davey: Okay. On tour with Leatherface. Ends up joining that J Church, Propagandhi, Avail tour. I went to New York a couple days early. Met up and went to the show where Propagandhi, Avail, and J Church were playing. Saw Beau Beau (Avail), and was like, "Hey, Beau Beau." And he's like, "I'm assuming you want to get in for free." I'm like, "No, but if you do, that's cool." He's all, "Okay, cool. So come on in."

We had shenanigans with beer on a previous Leatherface tour. The rule is the headlining band gets their beer stolen. So, that's what we did. Broke in their van, sat in their van, and drank their beer that they tried to hide in the van. If you ever get a chance to go on tour with Leatherface, do it because their micromanagement equals partying. [In a Frankie Stubbs voice] "We have certain rules. You have to steal the fookin' headliner band's

beer." Because of that rule, we end up in Texas, in Houston at Zelda's and the place upstairs. It looks like the Best Little Whorehouse in Texas. Propagandhi's playing, then that Fat tour is going on, plus, at that point, it might have been Pezz or Samiam. So, we're sitting around and Propagandhi, bless their dear hearts, are a pinko band, Socialist ideals. I'm down with that. I'm a pinko. I am really cool with communal property, communal living. And so is Frankie.

So, Frankie and I decide to liberate Propagandhi's beer in the name of communal property and keep up with the rules of punk, so it works out politically and personally. It was a two-person job liberating their beer. Lance (Hahn, J Church) is totally into it. He thinks it's the funniest fuckin' thing in the world. I always put Lance on a pedestal because there's so much love and respect for the dude, regardless of whether he's dead or alive right now. But I would never really joke around with him. So, Lance could be serious. And this was a serious Lance night. Lance was still living in Frisco at the time. He's like, "Yep. That's what you have to do. That sounds completely legitimate and rational to steal beer from a pinko band." So we liberated their beer and in comes Chris. We're well into their fuckin' beer. They're done playing. The most opportune time to steal a band's beer is while they're on stage. He comes through the door without a word. He wags his finger and takes the beer out of the room. I'm pretty sure that Frankie dove for the fuckin' cooler to take one more beer before it left the room. Once it leaves our room, it's not our property any more. It's communal. So, we have a laugh about it. Lance thinks it's the greatest thing in the world. Adam, the drummer, was lovin' it. Even Sampson's totally fuckin' into it. He's in there, "I get it. It's cool. Chris can be that way some times."



around and had fun. We played a show. Here for this festival."

Todd: It's seven AM.

Davey: "I went to sleep in the van and I woke up. I walked over to the bus bench over there." I'm pointing as I'm talking, and I look and there's a fuckin' bunch of balloons and shit that read "Happy Birthday." And I go, "No fuckin' way. No fuckin' way," over and over again. I go into my backpack. In San Diego I would have got shot, right then because I went into my backpack, and I pull out my pants. I go, "I just fuckin' changed 'em." I told you the whole story. I'm totally freaked out. "No, if you take me to jail, I will not get out of jail. They will kill me." The saving grace of that whole thing was, basically, all of a sudden, here comes a staff sergeant type. He gets out of the car, laughing his ass off. He's like, "They're not going to press charges but they

wanted me to tell you that you're a fuckin' idiot." The other cop's, "Okay, here's the deal. I called this in. We responded to an exposure incident. I have to do this. I have to take pictures of you." He switches really quick. "Look, if I even catch you so much as peeing in public, you're going to jail for this. You have one year and then you're off the hook. We will file charges against you." I was like, "Don't worry, dude. I will pee way the fuck far away from a party."

Aaron Lay (Billy Reese Peters) calls me the other day and leaves this message on my phone. And I don't check my messages, but I just happened to have to because there was a problem at work. When there's a problem at work, it's like, "Somebody asked for a ketchup packet and you didn't have any ketchup packets, so now what you're going to have to do tonight is, at the end of every night, forward me a count of how many

So, the next day, we're in Austin at Emo's, outside. It's kind of like this big festival thing, 'cause it's this huge fuckoff big deal. Merch booths everywhere. Frankie and I were like, "You know what we should do? We should liberate Propagandhi's T-shirts." This is the tour where we all dyed our hair the same color. We all had blonde pompadours. We all looked like Brian Setzer. Even Lainey dyed his bald head. Fuckin' retarded. He looked like a ginger. The whole tour, people think Frankie's Rob Halford, so we were calling ourselves Ludicrous Priest. So Frankie and I go around to all of the merch booths. "Hey, we need some free T-shirts because we're all communists here and this is communal property." And most everybody's like, "Yeah. Okay." The girl who was doing Avail's stuff was like, "Fuck, take what you want." We get to the Propagandhi table; Propagandhi's playing at the time, right. I love Propagandhi. I love John Sampson. I think he's a goddamn poet. I like *Potemkin City Limits* a lot. *How to Clean Everything* is one of the most beautiful goddamn things I've ever heard in my life. Yes, I have complete love and respect for Propagandhi in every way. We get to the merch guy and say, "We're going to liberate your T-shirts in the name of punk rock." He goes. "That's a great idea." Gives us a box of shirts.

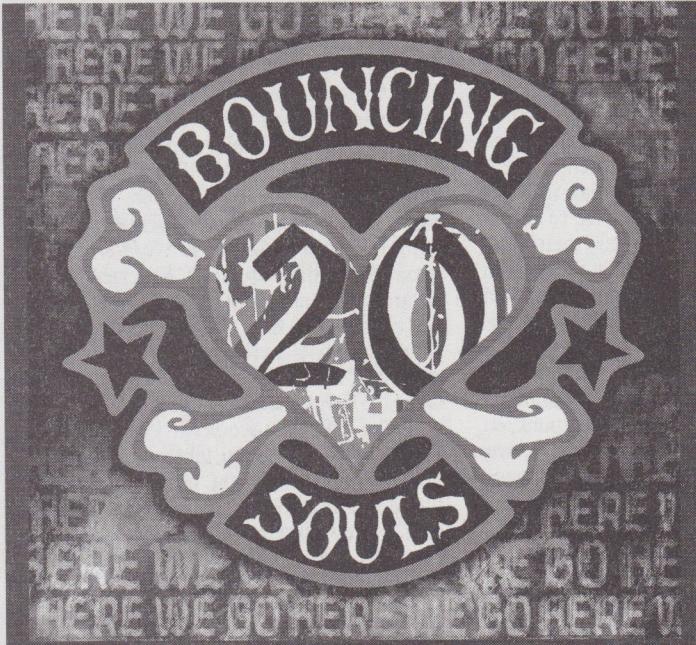
Frankie and I go right up on stage at Emo's, hold up a Propagandhi shirt. Chris is playing a song. He's got a look on his fuckin' face—"You fucking asshole." And we just started throwing their merch out to the crowd. But they're playing a song, so they're not going to stop. It was the most beautiful—that's true punk. He should have kicked my fucking head in for that. Ultimately, pinko Communism, shit like that, really fuckin' works until you have to put capitalist money into the gas tank. We can't all be like, "Okay, I bummed this gallon of gas and everybody gets a fifth of it because we're all on tour together." It's not like that.

ketchup packets you have." Seriously. This is the type of micromanagement shit that goes on.

Todd: That sucks.

Davey: And it's fucking retarded. Oh, great. Instead of being a manager, you have empowered me to work another six hours to do something completely inane so I can't save you money and you're going to have to shut down your business because you're over-tasking people. Anyway, so this stupid thing happens and I kind of have a serious phase of work going on. [In drunk, Southern Aaron Lay voice] "Hey, man. It's fuckin' Aaron Lay. Shit, dude. Hey, man, 'member that time you fuckin' showed your dick to a bunch of kids? I just walked by that house about four in the morning right now and people are naked in there—having a party and I think they're having sex—but there's naked dudes and naked chicks in there right

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A short, fast, loud approach to songwriting, politically pointed lyrics, and an abrasive delivery, Detournement's debut release, "Screaming Response", is a furious and scalding critique of a collapsing economic system, a battle-cry to define and organize the struggle, and a hardcore-punk record that sounds as if the genre was being discovered for the first time. Features members of Worthless United, Lifetime, Bigwig, Ensign, and Plan A Project.



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WE'RE ALL JUST REGULAR- ASSED PEOPLE WHO SHIT OUR PANTS ON OCCASION.

now, so you're totally off the hook, man."

Todd: The incident was seven years ago.

Davey: And that call was last month. That shit will haunt me forever. Now it's a landmark. Now it's going to be distributed by an international underground music magazine.

Todd: Davey, tell me the story about the master tapes to your LP, *Hair Brained Scheme Addicts*.

Davey: Do you understand what's going on right now? I have no fucking currency in a bar anymore?

Todd: Why's that?

Davey: Because these are all my best stories. Seriously. I'm never going to get a free drink.

Todd: You'll totally get a free drink. You're charming.

Davey: I've got to make up new stories. Is that what this is? You guys are so sick of these fucking stories, it's time to get new stories?

Todd: I love these stories. It's like a collection.

Davey: Let me tell you about the time I got married in a banana suit...Anyway. If I was John Larroquette [the comedian is muted on the TV] and I told that story, I would get paid hundreds of dollars for that joke...what's my next story?

Todd: Master tapes.

Davey: *Hair Brained*. You know I'm disappointed because we spent all the time recording it and then Danny (Cool Guy Records) was like, "I can only afford twelve hours more to mix it." I was like, "Fuck. I wanted to spend time mixing it." So we did a mix and I kind of removed myself from the mix. I don't like to mix. There's a couple things wrong with the mix, just in my head.

Todd: What you had envisioned.

Davey: Right, like when you're a four year old and you're trying to draw a flower and it doesn't look like a flower. You're bummed out and mommy goes, "That's such a nice rhinoceros." "No, it's supposed to be a fuckin' flower." That's just the way I feel. Fine. Cool. Whatever. Anyway, Tiltwheel was playing at Chain Reaction, that Fifteen thing (record release), which was awesome [snort laughs]. This guy on a motorcycle pulls up and I'm drinking beer in the parking lot. The bouncer comes up. I give the bouncer a beer. He takes the beer over

to the pedestal, hides it, and he's drinking it when nobody's looking. Then, the owner, Ron (Martinez, Final Conflict) came out, "You can't be drinking in the parking lot." The tone of his voice was, "Fuck, I have to tell you guys every single time." And I always go, "Well, yeah. I'm fuckin' in my thirties. I drink in the fuckin' parking lot 'cause I like punk and punks drink."

Todd: In parking lots.

Davey: I can go to the Denny's and get hassled by the fuckin' pigs. You think the cops don't know what we're doing in the parking lot? They're driving by a hundred times a night. Anyway, Ron yells and the fuckin' bouncer that I gave a beer to comes over. He fuckin' rats us out. "I've been telling these guys not to drink all night." I'm all, "Motherfucker, I gave you a beer." I'm telling Ron, "If you look in that pedestal, there's a beer in there." He's all, "That's because I took it from a kid." "You're a fucker. You're a dick. I hope you get fuckin' fired."

Anyways, later, outside, drinking a beer again. Now I don't give a fuck. Dude pulls up, comes up to me. "Hey, which one of you guys is in Tiltwheel? I just bought these two-inch tapes from a studio and on the master sheet"—the track sheet tells you what's on the tracks and what instruments, who played it, and the timing. It gives you the frequency it's set at, all the information when you put it in, you can set everything up to match whatever tape it is. Head alignment, things like that. He's all, "Yeah, so I've been sitting here, mixing it. I'm coming up with some really great stuff. I bought all these tapes for fifty bucks." These tapes last eight minutes or something like that at the high speed. That record's a half hour long, so there are a lot of these motherfucking tapes. We paid hundreds of dollars and this dude bought all these tapes for the price of a couple of twelve packs. "Dude, so do you think I could get those tapes back?" And he's all, "Yeah. Here's my card if you want me to send you copies of the mixes." I'm like, "Is there any way I can get those tapes back? I will buy them for twice what you paid for them or buy you brand new goddamn Ampex 456 tape." It was the gold. They were really, really good tapes. That shit's impossible to find. He gave me his card and they're gone.

The whole time, all these years, "Hey Danny, did you go pick up our tapes?" He'd be like, "Oh, yeah. I'm going on Monday to pick 'em up." I'd be like, "Danny, did you get the tapes?" "Yeah, I picked 'em up, man. No problem." He didn't pick 'em up. They got fuckin' sold. Cool. Whatever. Maybe I should have gone up there and got them myself. But that's a shame. I'd like to have all the original tapes. I'd like to have all that shit. I'm never going to redo any of this shit again. I'm still going to be doing this shit until I'm fifty, but I'm still never going to do it again and there's going to be a day when I'm sitting back reminiscing on my life. It just happens to be now, so fuck me. There might be a day when I actually take all the photos and all the flyers and make a scrapbook. Who knows? Maybe. Maybe not. Maybe I'll have something to pass on. But I would like to have those tapes.

Todd: Archiving.

Davey: I love to archive. I'm an archivist. I hate the government. Archivey. Down with stuff. [Laughs] But I want that. Part of me wants to kill that fuckin' guy—two more reasons—is because I want that record back. I want those fuckin' tapes back. I'm sure he's probably recorded his space jams or some shit on there. "This track's called 'Sunday Night, 2:20 AM Mushroom.' Fuckin' vortex." It's like, "Hey, asshole, fuck you, man. I offered you fresh tape." So I'm kinda bummed. It's like an unfinished project. It's like having a car in your driveway.

Todd: It's like *Better Off Dead*. You've got an unworking Camaro.

Davey: Yeah, it is. That came out of my head. The reason I don't like *Hair Brained* is because I wrote that entire record in my head, driving back from work every night. After leaving Velvet, driving back from work, trying not to get pulled over, focusing on what I was doing, not even really realizing at the time—you can call it ADD or whatever the fuck it is—I just call it life. Because things flowed through your head. You can't just sit there and go, "All right, cool. I'm going to write a book. Bring me a typewriter." It goes through your head forever. Things go through your head. You're interviewing some fucking band.

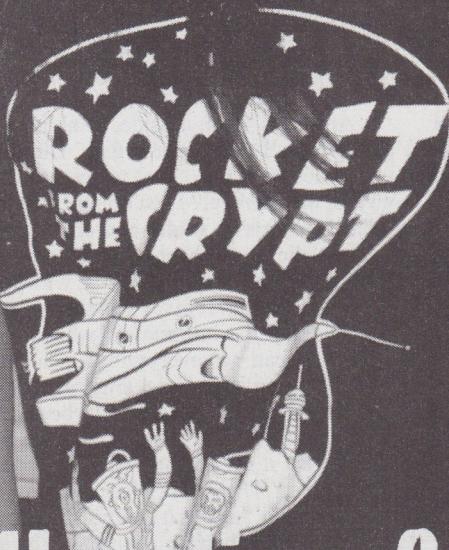
Todd: I'm always editing, putting things back together in my mind.

Davey: Everything. It works out and you have a vision. Each copy of the fuckin' zine, you know what it looks like before you even start doing it, maybe. There's happy accidents and shit like that.

Todd: I know the basic shape I'm going for.

Davey: Exactly. You can see it. But *Hair Brained* was almost calculated and it got fucked up somewhere along the line and that's why I don't like it. I can't sit back and listen to that record with an open ear. *Festivus* (*Everready*), totally. I think *Festivus* is a great goddamn record. The new record that we're doing, if the bass turns out the way we want to hear it, if the fuckin' mix comes out right, man, that would be my favorite thing we ever did. But everything is like that until it actually hits that point. There

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are two things in Shitwheel that I'm really happy with that I would keep in my record collection if Hitler or George Bush said, "Okay. Everybody in this country is allowed three things." I would take a laptop, the first 7" (Self-titled) we did, and the skateboard 7" (*The Heavens Declare the Glory of the Bomb and the Firmament Showeth His Handiwork*). Put a saddle on the dog and put Annie (Davey's wife) on it. I've got to push the envelope. I love those two records, I really do. But *Festivus* I would bring, too. I think the Daves (Too Many Daves, another band Davey is in) are awesome.

Todd: I do, too.

Davey: I can sit back and pretend I'm not in that band. *Festivus*, I can do the same. I think *Festivus* is one of the best goddamn records I've heard in my life. I think it's stupid how awesome it is. "I got blurry vision from television." Oh, fuck. Jesus. If Tom Verlaine (Television) wrote that lyric... Brian is a fuckin' genius.

Todd: Davey, is there any credence to the belief that many people think you've self-sabotaged Tiltwheel? That you have fears of it becoming too popular or it being something you don't want it to be, so you'd rather have it gone?

Davey: Paul can go fuck himself. If Paul wants to be a rock star, he should speak the fuck up.

Todd: It wasn't from Paul.

Davey: Who was it? Bob?

Todd: Just people I talked to, it's just...

Davey: Who? It's not like I want to know who they are and go fuckin' call 'em on it. I know that's the consensus. This is the easy answer. I'm fuckin' pissed now—I'm not really pissed—okay, I am pissed because here's the easy answer. Guess what? I'm a punk rocker and I don't play corporate bullshit and I wear used clothes. And I buy used guitars on the cheap and I trade equipment instead of buying and selling equipment. And I support my local recording people. I would rather eat at Pokez or the little old man with the grill on the corner than go to Mimi's Café (a chain). That's what there is. Okay, am I self-sabotaging Tiltwheel or am I just holding true? Why are you interviewing me and not *Rolling Stone*? And, goddamn, *Rolling Stone* is one hell of a magazine. [Gloating] Did you read that article about Paris Hilton?

Todd: I'm not talking shit. I agree. I want Tiltwheel to be around as long as possible, not as popular as someone thinks could be feasible.

Davey: I can barely stand the two Boston records that exist. Because we're talking about Shitwheel now. There's four Boston records now, apparently. The other two didn't come out for twenty-five years apart and they're horrible. *Third Stage* is a pretty bad record and now they don't even have Brad Delp anymore. He's fuckin' dead, man. Because Tiltwheel's Boston. We really are. We're the best band [snickers] and we're the best because we put out one record every fifteen years.

TODD: HOW DID YOU BUM OUT A BUNCH OF PUNKS AT THE HOLIDAYS IN THE SUN FESTIVAL IN NEW JERSEY?

DAVEY: BY BEING THERE.



TODD TAYLOR

Todd: You want to be true to yourself and there's also so much bad advice out there that people take all the time.

Davey: Okay, but the fact of the matter is that the band is organic. I'm going to let you in on a secret that I let Paul in on. I don't go looking for shows. I don't call you, and go, "Hey, wouldn't it be rad if you interviewed me? Hey, Todd, you may not like the new record, but, please, give it a good review and put it pretty close to the advertisement."

Todd: "Make sure the ad's on the right side, so when people are flipping through and not reading it, they can see it."

Davey: [To a Chihuahua] Her butt hole is fuckin' disgusting. You gotta do something. Her butt is bigger than her fuckin' head. Something's gotta happen. No wonder she can't grow. Her butt is growing. Here's the secret. Never ask for a show. The Casbah. People are excited when they play the Casbah. Say, the Naked Raygun show, "Hey, Tim, can we play with Naked Raygun?" And it's, "Yeah, sure. No problem." One email. That's it. I don't think that's really annoying anybody. Being on the other side of the bar and having the guy who you don't want to talk to from the band you don't like...

Todd: GGBB: good guys, bad band.

Davey: For the GGBB band. I've been on that side of the table where you end up with this packet that somebody took three hours to put together and spent \$1.90 to send out. I did send Fat Mike (Fat Wreck Chords) a Tiltwheel CD. Do you want the quick reason why? Because Chicken (Dead To Me) was working there at the time. This was when *Hair Brained* came out, so it's been awhile. Chicken was like eight, right? And Floyd (Cheeky Git Records) was there and Jim Cherry was like, "Just fuckin' do it." He was talking me into it. The main thing was: I don't care. I'm going to send them a CD. I also sent one to Sean in Wat Tyler.

Todd: Rugger Bugger Records.

Davey: I got back a response from both of them. The Fat Wreck Chords response is a checklist of, say, four things. I haven't seen it in awhile. Maybe we'll send them a CD and see if they send one back. It goes, in descending order, "1) Yes, we love your band. We want to sign you, put you on tour with NOFX, and make you a million dollars. 2) Yeah, we like your band. Please send us something in the future, 'cause we'll keep an ear out. 3) No. Fuck off. Break your band

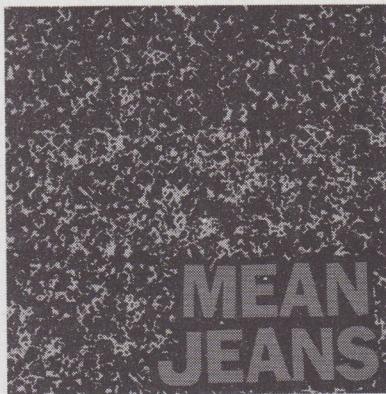
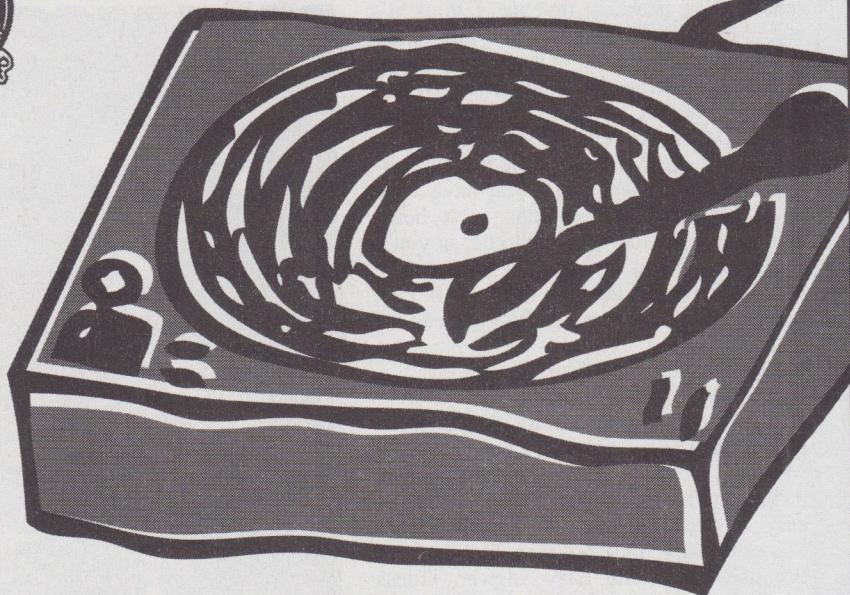
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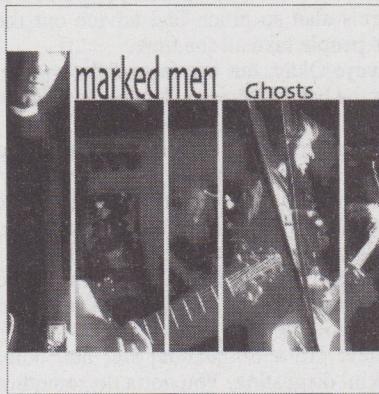


Coming soon: The Estranged - singles comp LP, Autistic Youth LP/CD, Potential Johns 7", Psyched To Die 7"/CD, Raydios - Now LP Something Fierce - There Are No Answers

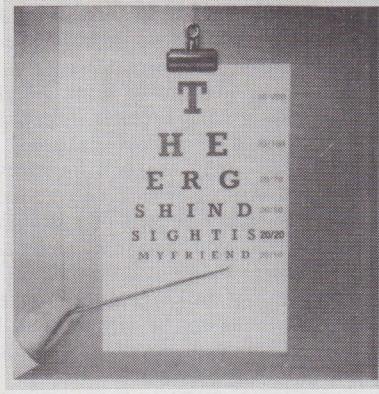
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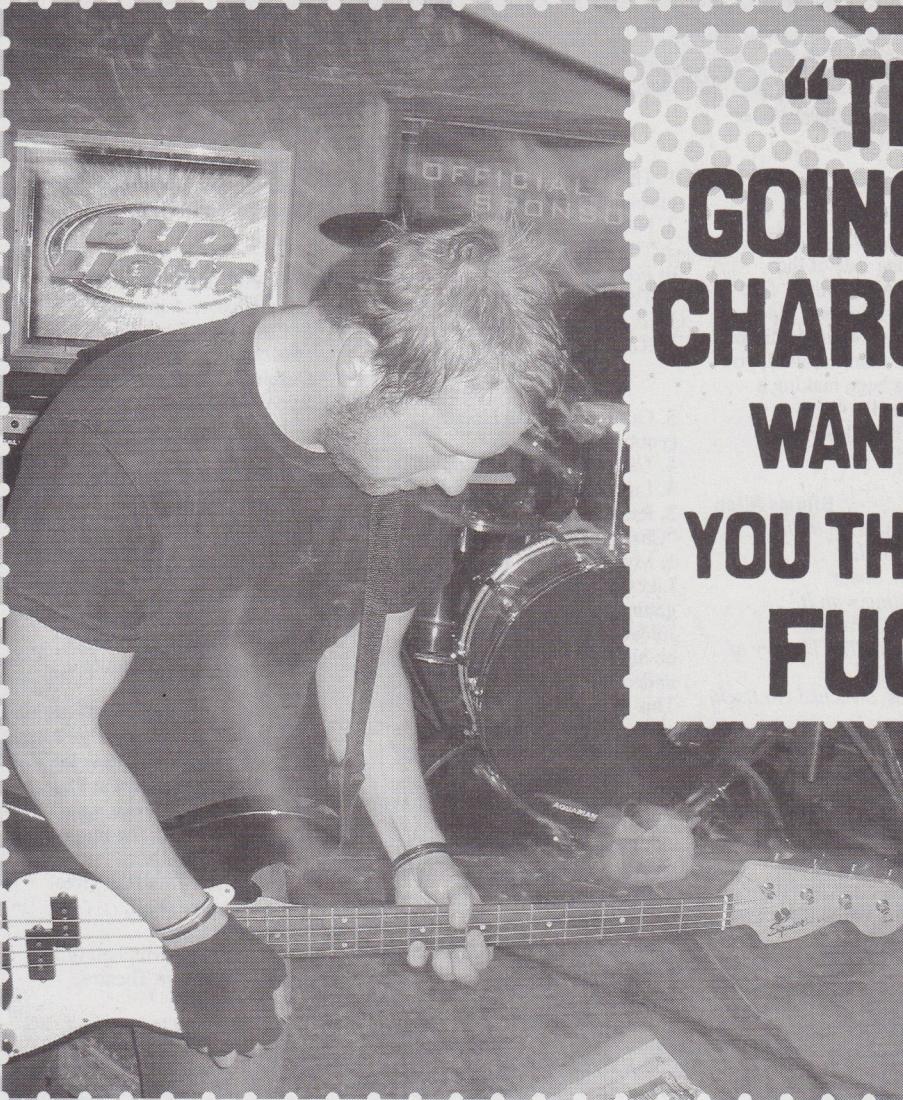
Mean Jeans - License 2 Chill 7". low-brow party-punk anthems from PDX. full length in the works!



Marked Men - Ghosts LP/CD their best one yet. no shit.



The Ergs - Hindsight Is 20/20, My Friend double LP/CD bloated, monstrous 33 song singles comp.



"THEY'RE NOT GOING TO PRESS CHARGES BUT THEY WANTED ME TO TELL YOU THAT YOU'RE A FUCKIN' IDIOT."

TODD TAYLOR

up." It's the coolest fuckin' letter. Ours was marked in the center. We're going to get there soon.

And Sean sent me back one and I didn't know Sean at the time. Now we do. He's the English guy who made the "Shopping Is For Cunts" bag. He was like, "Thanks for sending your CD. Please send another one when you sound more like Blondie." [Laughs] Okay. Cool. Honestly, those are two labels that I like because Fat puts out Snuff records and so does Sean. But I don't care. I would kill myself if we got popular if it was fed to somebody, because we blame everyone for that anyway. So, I keep it organic. If someone likes our band who's not in a band and not asking us for a show or a stepping stone—'cause that shit happens; it's fuckin' real—and I fucking hate that shit, if somebody does that. [Davey looks over and realizes that the dog has eaten through a box of unused tampons and currently has a boner.] Shit. [To Annie's daughter] Genevieve, I didn't sign a permission slip to have you watch this.

Have I ever sabotaged Tiltwheel? No. By keeping it organic, we're exactly

where we should be. How about this? Are we sabotaging Tiltwheel by staking too much faith in our jobs and family situation? I have a job and I'm married. I don't like my job enough to not play music. If marriage is,理想istically, what it should be, then me taking off two, three, four months out of twelve shouldn't be that much of a problem. I don't know if you know this, but I'm kind of a technical dude. I understand that Sarah gets really bummed out when Troy's (of Cattle Decapitation) Both work with Davey) going on tour. But I was just telling her, "Say you didn't work together and he was at work eight hours a day, five to six days a week." Or talk to the lady whose husband is a construction guy who works twelve hours a day or the Chinese mother who doesn't see her twelve-year-old child sixteen hours a day. You take all the time that they're away from home anyway and you put that together, and I would almost venture to say that tour probably takes up less of you're fuckin' time.

Todd: It's just consolidated.

Davey: When you're sick, would you rather be really fuckin' sick for three hours

or be sorta sick for two weeks? I just think of it in weird terms like that. Why are there two Tiltwheels? Why is there touring Tiltwheel? Because I'm "sabotaging" it? Why do I not pursue things? Because I don't like that. Why aren't we as popular as people want us to be or people say we deserve or whatever beautiful things they say about us? You know why? Because whoever likes us, likes us. I like everybody who likes us. Except for that one motherfucker. [Laughs]

I say, natural and organic. It's real and there's no falseness. I don't search out these things. I don't go, "Hey bro, man, check out my band." Most of the people around me have no fucking clue I'm in a band or don't give a fuck. I like that. That's basically it. There's a difference between playing music because you have nothing else to do and playing music because you don't want to do anything else. The world doesn't owe me a living. I just like playing punk rock music and hanging out and drinking beer and traveling for next to nothing and I think everybody should do it, but it doesn't mean that everybody has to be a rock star. But, honestly, if there are folks in our band who want to go further than where we are as a band now and do those things, I will never go, "No," unless someone goes, "We should really play a showcase at the Whisky and get a bus," and all this shit. Or go pander to that shit.

TOP FIVES

RAZORCAKE STAFF

Adrian Salas

Top 5 Songs for a Night of Sweet, Sweet, Love Making

5. Kid Dynamite, "Two for Flinching"—The two (or more) of you will be doing some sexy flinching all night long... just hopefully in under ten seconds.
4. Big Black, "Kerosene"—Just what you need to set the night on fire.
3. Einstuzende Neubauten, "Schmerzen Hören (Listen with Pain)"—No one knows about romance like Europeans.
2. Descendents, "Enjoy"—You'll definitely be "Enjoy"ing the night when you put this mix on at your next swinger's party.
1. Fuckemos, the entire *Can Kill You* album—Nothing like a low, sexy voice to put people in the mood, and voices don't get much lower (or sexier) than this.

Amy Adoyzie

I Haven't Been to a Punk Rock Show in Almost a Year and a Half! Roster of Bands I've Never Seen That Would Make the Best Welcome Back Show Ever

- Good Luck
- Shang-A-Lang
- Marked Men
- Jay Reatard
- Reigning Sound

Art Ettinger

- Thermals, *Now We Can See* LP
- Bonecrusher, *Our Nations Burning* 10"
- Pansy Division, *Life in a Gay Rock Band* DVD
- Runnin' Riot, *Boots & Ballads* CD
- Yum Yums, *Whatever Rhymes with Baby* LP

Ben Snakepit

1. Seventeen Again/No People, split 7" (maybe it's old but I just got it)
2. Brokedowns/Sass Dragons, split 7"

3. Too Many Daves, *2008: A Shitfaced Odyssey* 7"
4. The Shellshag side of the Shellshag/TBIAPB split 7" (No offense to This Bike Is A Pipe Bomb, but what's with the disco drums? If Ted wasn't around, you shouldn't have been making a Pipebomb record!)
5. Screaming Females/Full Of Fancy, split 7"

Billups Allen

Top 5 LPs I Bought in a Thrift Store for One Dollar

1. Sonic Youth, *Sister*
2. D.R.I., *Dealing with It*
3. The Records, *Crashes*
4. Various Artists, *The History of Chess Rock n' Roll*
5. Walter Carlos, *Switched-On Bach*

Buttertooth

1. *Our Stolen Future* (book) Three authors, a scientific detective story about synthetic compounds and how they negatively affect us.
2. *Physiological Psychology* (book) It's for a class, but it's been consuming vast amounts of my time and energy.
3. Miles Davis, *Descent L'asceur*, a movie score for an indie French film... but he kills it.
4. Chattanooga TN, the pedestrian bridge, Coolidge Park, and ghenkis khan self selection meal was good times!
5. San Diego Zoo passes. How else should we spend everyday? Those baby gorillas make me wanna camp the rest of my life in African savannahs!

Chris Pepus

- M.O.T.O., the Lushes, live at Deluxe, Maplewood, Missouri
- Rod Serling, "Does the Name Grimsby Do Anything to You?" (short story)
- Bitch Slap Barbie, *13 The Hard Way* CD
- *Gomorrah* (film)
- J Church, *Seishun Zankoku Monogatari* CD

Craig Horky

1. The Matadors of Shame, unreleased last album
2. Ninja Gun, *Restless Rubes*
3. The Riot Before, *Fists Buried in Pockets*
4. The Paper Chase, *God Bless Your Black Heart*
5. RZA, *Bobby Digital*

Craven Rock

5. Gumby Banging Horses (youtube video)
4. *Underworld Crawl* #6 (zine)
3. Lungfish, *Pass and Stow* CD
2. Patti Smith, "Changing of the Guard"
1. My Roommate, Aaron Likeyameanit, for impulsively getting our retarded dog friend Jolene's teethmarks tattooed on him, all prison-style and underscored by the word "hooray". This was hours after she playfully chomped his arm and before the welts went away. His first tattoo.

CT Terry

1. *The Screwed Up Life of Charlie The Second* (Novel), Drew Ferguson
2. Thes One, *Mustache Soul Mix*
3. Black Lips, *Good Bad Not Evil* LP
4. Saxondale DVDs (Steve Coogan!)
5. Recording a rap song in L.A. on my thirtieth b-day

Danny Martin

Top 5 Tucson bands... (That Aren't Bob Log or Calexico)

1. Digital Leather
2. Nobunny
3. Shark Pants
4. The Tics
5. Winelord

Daryl Gussin

- Brokedowns / Sass Dragons, split 7" tie with Brokedowns / Turkish Techno split 7"
- Street Eaters / White Night, split 7"
- Marked Men / Birthday Suits, split 7"
- Young Offenders / Giant Haystacks, split 12"
- RVIVR, *Life Moves* 7", live, and hot sauce

Designated Dale

5 Covers Recorded by the Ramones That Smoke the Originals

- "California Sun" (The Rivieras)
- "I Don't Want to Grow Up"

(Tom Waits)

- "Let's Dance" (Chris Montez)
- "Palisades Park" (Freddy Cannon)
- "Surfin' Safari" (The Beach Boys)

Donofthedead

- *Razorcake* hittin' issue 50!
- Kalashnikov, *Angoscia Rock* 7"
- SoCal Pyrate Punk Fest in the desert
- Despise You/Lack of Interest, live
- Eye for an Eye, *Cisza* CD

Ever, a.k.a. "Girl about Town"

1. RVIVR, *Life Moves* 7"
2. Despise You/Lack of Interest at the Boulevard and Thorns of Life at Babe's Warehouse (live shows)
3. *The Girl from H.O.P.P.E.R.S.* pt.2 Jaime Hernandez (comic)
4. Dodger season 2009! Pa-pa pa pa! Let's go, Dodgers!
5. N.N., self-titled demo tape

Jennifer Federico

Top 5 Recent Fun Shows That I Was Too Late to Write a Review for

1. The Fresh and Onlys at The Eagle Tavern, San Francisco
2. Shakes Gown at The Eagle Tavern, San Francisco
3. Murder City Devils at Great American Music Hall, San Francisco
4. John Cameron Mitchell (and friends) at Victoria Theatre, San Francisco
5. Bronze at An Undisclosed Location, San Francisco

Jessica T

Top 5 Plays on My Mp3 Player This Week

1. Crazy Cavan n the Rhythm Rockers, *Our Way of Rockin'* LP
2. Flatlanders, *More A Legend Than A Band* LP
3. Astounding Roy Gorbisons, "Psycho Swing"
4. Memphis Morticians, *Play Primitive Trashman and 13 Other Lovesongs* CD
5. Various Artists, *Studio One Ska* CD

Jim Ruland

1. Northern Towns, *Good As Gold* CDEP
2. Gurtrudestein, *The Power of Human Failure* CD
3. Drug Lords of the Avenues, *Sing Songs* CD
4. Blue Sky Law, *Gravity Made Us Run* CD EP
5. Thurneman, *Luggsliter Evnad* CD

Hip hop guys love limited edition vinyl toys about drugs.

Joe Evans III

1. The Ergs!, *Ben Kweller 12"* re-issue
2. Cheeky, *Everything/Live/Etc.*
3. The Nojons, *Unnatural Selections* tape
4. Red Phone Dispatch, *Safety in Numbers CD*
5. Animal Crossing, *City Folk*

Josh Benke

- Nobunny, Rock'n'Roll
- Adventure Kids, Yellow Eyes at the Hideout and Chapel Tavern (live shows)
- Mayyors, Eat Skull, Green Green, Ebonics at 300 Lounge (live show)
- Dum Dum Girls, *Longhair 7"*
- The Equals, *Equals Supreme LP*
- Hunx and His Punx, *Hey Rocky 7"*

Keith Rosson

Goddamn, Libraries Are Awesome: Rad Fiction in 2009 (So Far)

- *The Story of My Baldness* by Marek Van Der Jagt
- *If You Want Me to Stay* by Michael Parker
- *Towelhead* by Alicia Erian
- *The Wonders of the Invisible World* by David Gates (stories)
- *The Gum Thief* by Douglas Coupland

Kiyoshi Nakazawa

Top 5 Reasons for Getting Fired in Today's Economy

1. Your band is going on a really big tour "into the city."
2. The heroin was making you fall asleep at the wheel.
3. Your girlfriend already has a job.
4. Your zine just got a really awesome review on the internet and will probably start selling, like, a million copies now.
5. Three words: "Economic Bailout Plan."

Kurt Morris

1. 1950s sex education films
2. Christian scare films
3. Obits, *I Blame You*
4. Death, *...For the Whole World to See*
5. My friend Jeremiah's radio show (globerradio.org, Sat. 9-11pm)

Maddy Tight Pants

Top Five Books I've Read in 2009 (so far)!

1. *Myth of the Welfare Queen* by David Zucchino
2. *Death and the Penguin* by Andrey Kurkov
3. *Monkey Girl: Evolution, Education, Religion, and the Battle for America's Soul* by Edward Humes

4. Mayakovsky, poster book (Just posters! No words! Punk rock!)
5. *Perfect Example* by John Porcellino (About the twentieth time I've read it. If you haven't read it, you must!)

Matt Average

1. Wolfbrigade, *Comalive LP*
2. Blank Dogs, live at PehrSpace and *On Two Sides CD*
3. Internal Corrosion, live at the Relax Bar
4. Masshysteri, *Var Del Av Stan LP*
5. Die Princess Die, *Lions Eat Lions Deluxe CD*

Miss Namella

Top Five Reasons to Love Los Angeles—This Time Around

1. Primal Scream at Nokia Live. Ari Up got hassled for carrying only a passport. Fellow Brit cried racism (which I found satisfying/ironic/amusing...)
2. Megawand at Pinche Way/ Mountain Bar
3. The Annenberg Photography Center in Century City
4. Daikokuya Ramen—pork me! Pork me harder!!!
5. The Pusher Show at Munky King—Hip hop guys love limited edition vinyl toys about drugs.

Mr. Z

1. Killer Dreamer, third LP
2. Peelander-Z, Dead Birds and Blind Kids, Holding On To Sound, live at Double Down Saloon
3. *Dirt Cult Mix Tape Volume II*
4. Underground Railroad to Candyland, live
5. The Mapes new/first-ever CD on Recess Japan

Naked Rob

(*KSCU 103.3FM & Pirate Cat Radio 87.9FM, SFCA*)

1. Cain (Metal band-Milano, IT)
2. Calibro Nove (Hardcore band-Milano, IT)
3. Pogue Mahones Pub (Milano, IT)
4. Birrificio Lambrate Bar (Milano, IT)
5. Thanks to: Marco, Aldo, Laurent, Sheila, Andrea, Tommy and Kerri for a great time in Milano, IT. Ciao ciao!

Nardwuar The Human Serviette

1. *Shindig Magazine* (Love the story on the Count V !)
2. Bash Brothers, *Party Hat 7"* (Two piece from Nanaimo, BC, Canada!)
3. Jeff and the nice people at Cheapos Records in Austin, Texas!
4. The Spores News, *Weather and Spores CD* (Re-issue of wonderful Vancouver punk band)
5. Nasty On Squid LP

N.L. Dewart

The Gamits Top 5 Songs

1. "Last of the Mullets"
2. "Song about a Song"
3. "Compatible"
4. "I Don't Wanna Play No More"
5. "Dotted Lines"

Rene Navarro

1. God Equals Genocide and San Pedro El Cortez, live in Tijuana
2. Reigning Sound, *Home for Orphans*
3. Bikini Kill, *Pussy Whipped*
4. Sleater-Kinney, *Dig Me Out*
5. Suicide File, *Some Mistakes You Never Stop Paying for*

Rhythm Chicken

- The Happy Schnapps Combo, *Raise it! CD*
- Barley Pops (East Charleston & Palm), best happy hour bar in Vegas.
- Clark County Library District and System
- The Coffee Cup, Boulder City, NV.
- The Draft House (North Rancho), Las Vegas, a Wisconsinite's oasis in the dry, dry West! Klements Kielbasa, cheese curds, and enough Lombardi memorabilia to make Ditka's pecker shrivel up and fall off!

Ryan Horky

1. Agnostic Front, live at Mac's Bar, Lansing, MI, 4/4/09
2. Bruce Springsteen, *Greetings from Asbury Park CD*
3. Spermbirds, *Something to Prove LP*
4. Cannibal Corpse, *Evisceration Plague CD*
5. D.R.I., *Crossover LP*

Ryan Leach

1. The Vivian Girls' new LP
2. John Cale, *Paris 1919*
3. Michel Polnareff
4. Schatzi and Hazeltine
5. Karl Marx

Sarah Shay

Things I'm Glad Exist Right Now

1. "The Other Father's Song"
2. The Redwood Plan
3. Peach Jell-O
4. The Brothers Bloom
5. Blues dancing

Sean Koepenick

Top 5 Bands I Am Stoked to See at Insubordination Fest 2009

1. Dead Milkmen
2. Boris The Sprinkler
3. Banner Pilot
4. The Hextalls
5. The Dopamines

Steve

1. The Obits, *I Blame You LP*. Only band this dude has been in that I give a shit about.
2. The Boys, CDR. Some rad new acoustic thing someone burned me.
3. Thermals, *Now We Can See LP*
4. Abner Jay, *True Story of... LP*, turrible music!
5. Ringers, all the new songs and touring the west coast with them in May!

Susan Chung

Last 5 Awesome Shows

1. Shang-A-Lang, God Equals Genocide, Turkish Techno at some house in Fullerton, CA 2/28/09
2. Ben Weasel at the Knitting Factory in Hollywood, CA 3/14/09
3. Sunnyside at Juanita's in Highland Park, CA 3/15/09
4. Turkish Techno, RVIVR, For the Win, Atom Age, at Menagerie in Riverside, CA 3/22/09
5. RVIVR, Sunnyside, City Mouse, Cheaptimes! at Angelo's in Pomona, CA 3/23/09

Todd Taylor

- Gordon Gano's Army, Self-titled LP
- Chinese Telephones, *Democracy 2004-2008 CD*
- RVIVR, *Life Moves 7"EP*
- Dead Mechanical, *A Great Lie 7"EP*
- Ergs!, *Hindsight Is 20/20, My Friend 2 x LP*
- Tie: Sass Dragons / Brokedowns split 7", Shang-a-Lang / Turkish Techno split 7", Marked Men / Birthday Suits split 7"

Tim Jamison

Top Five St. Louisans Who Left to Play Punk Rock

1. D.H. Peligro, Dead Kennedys
2. Zander Schloss, Circle Jerks
3. James Wilsey, The Avengers
4. Dave Wagenschutz, Kid Dynamite, Paint it Black, Good Riddance, Lifetime.
5. Barry Galvin, Christian Death

Ty Stranglehold

Top Five "H" Bands:

1. Hüsker Dü
2. Hanson Brothers
3. Hickey
4. Hoosegow
5. Hudson Mack

Vincent Battilana

- Nightstick Justice, all
- Sexy, *Por Vida LP*
- Futurama, all
- Civil Victim, *Mehr Kreig! 7"*
- RVIVR, *Life Moves 7"*

A FINE BOAT, THAT COFFIN!

Morse Zeichen: CD

Yeah, yeah, they're German, but they remind me quite a bit of Portland's own They Found My Naked Corpse Face Down In The Snow: it's some brutal, manic, screamy shit that pretty much ditches any sort of Blood Brother-esque hair-waving sassiness and goes right for the jugular. Stuff like this has never translated that well to record for me, but I feel pretty comfortable in assuming these guys would weaken the foundation of any basement they happen to be playing in. Four songs seems a bit thin, but at least they're keeping it in the red the whole time without running the risk of getting repetitive. The lyrics are in German but they've got some liner notes for each song in English—they come off as pretty precious at times ("Most brightly of all burned the hair of my evening loved one: to her I send the coffin of lightest wood.") but maybe some of that's due to the rough translations. Overall, a nice attack.

—Keith Rosson (Tor Johnson)

ABADDON: *Life Out of Balance*: 12" EP

Metalcore with a definite '90s influence. Reminds me of bands like Acme, Congress, and Systral to more recent bands like Thou. Heavy, pummeling music, and dual throat shredding grindcore vocals. It does get a bit tedious at times with the technical breaks and constant hammering, but when they let loose and just go for it, it's not too bad. Better than all this acoustic punk stuff happening these days. I know, apples and oranges, but c'mon.... —M.Avg (Sacred Plague)

ABRADE: Self-titled: 7" EP

Noisy, grindy, thrashy, and occasionally sludgy. My initial reaction was this ain't really breaking any new ground, but they gleefully keep bouncing from one tempo to the next that it keeps you on yer toes the whole way through, which makes for something that stands out from the pack. The little paper wrapped around the cover says this is limited to one hundred copies, so those who like their hardcore fast and barely in control better start scramblin' for it. —Jimmy Alvarado (Southkore)

ALBERT SQUARE, THE / HARD GIRLS:

Split: CD

The Albert Square: When the drums kicked in at first, it reminded me of a band of high school kids trying to sound like Fugazi (which I'm not knockin—I mean it in the sense that it had that youthful energy to it, just without the "How are they even playing that?" thoughts I usually have when listening to Fugazi). Then the vocals came in, and I realized,

RECORD REVIEWS



"Finally, a record that can be used
to rip paint off walls."

—Speedway Randy

TEENERS, THE: Gold: 7"

"Oh, this is clearly Dan Andriano from Alkaline Trio singing". I mean, "supposedly it's not", but I'm convinced they're lying. I mean, I thought the dude was going to start singing about his sore back. So basically, Albert Square: Young Fugazi, fronted by Dan Andriano. Hard Girls: They reminded me of Hot Water Music a lot, but without vocals of anyone who's sang for Alkaline Trio at any point. —Joe Evans III (Silver Sprocket, silversprocket.net)

ALIEN SEX FIEND:

R.I.P.—A 12" Collection: 2 x CD

Alien Sex Fiend is one of those rare bands so unique that one has a helluva time trying to describe with words what they sound like. Death Rock? Punk? Rockabilly? Synthy art damage? Brooding psychoses set to a dance beat? You get all the above in spades, plus bizarre lyrics and a visual presentation that someone must've dreamed up while watching *The Munsters* with a head full of some kick-ass acid. As the title suggests, this is a collection of tracks culled from various 12" singles and EPs, but it would serve just as well as a "best of" initiation for anyone interested in dipping their toes in what the band has to offer. A good dose of their prime material—"Dead and Buried," "Now I'm Feeling Zombified," "I Walk the Line," "Hurricane Fighter Plane," "Inferno," "Smells Like..."

and a fistful of others—are here for the listening, so those interested in tuneage from a band that yowls with the best of 'em yet refuses to be easily plopped into any one category would do well to pick this up. —Jimmy Alvarado (www.cherryred.co.uk)

ALL THROUGH A LIFE: Self-titled: 7" EP

Angular, discordant stuff that would've been huge had they come outta DC in the late '80s and had been affiliated with a certain label that still resides in that area. —Jimmy Alvarado (Clue #2)

ALLIGATOR:

Prehistoric Reptilians: Cassette

Thrashing cymbal crashes offset with treble-kicking guitar parts to scatter the magnetic ions on this tape-recorded gem. This group is made up of various members of other bands and this effort feels and seems like a Sergeant Pepper's Lonely Heart Club Band of sorts. (The urban legend: The Beatles invented alter egos to forget being The Beatles and just make music made from a fresh state of mind without expectations.) But instead of dressing like cashiers at Long John Silvers, the members of Alligator don alligator attire at shows and this tape, previously released as an LP and CD, includes track names such as "Iguana Tooth," "Anacondas," and "Rattlesnakes," to name a few. These

songs mix yelling vocals with dance-y tight rhythms, which makes the music feel like a less experimental Q And Not U. In line with Dischord ten-dollar credos, "Pay no more than \$5" is printed in the tape notes. But more line with their very own *Prehistoric Reptilians* credos this recording you can get on an old school cassette tape. My only qualm with this release is the eight tracks go by so fast that they leave me wanting for more. —N.L. Dewart (People's Republic Of Rock And Roll)

AMERICAN DRAFT: Hawk: CD

The Fucking Champs are back and they're called American Draft. Wow. This shit is amazing and totally righteous. Perhaps it's just because I've been listening to *Crack the Skye* lately, but American Draft remind me of Mastodon, as far as the metal guitars and how tight they are. However, American Draft is entirely instrumental save for one song, "Dragon," and, frankly, the screamy vocals don't seem to fit in with the music. Comprised of members from Volta Do Mar (another instrumental, albeit much different band), the sound is very reminiscent of the Champs, too, but does enough to stand on its own. It isn't all brutalizing, as the track "Wind" shows an electronic and acoustic side to the band, but soon thereafter American Draft is back to kicking ass and taking names. I didn't know what to expect, based on the cover photo of a hawk perched on the hand of an elderly man with a white beard, but this rocked pretty hard. If you belong to a gym, when you're there and no one is looking, switch the music on the sound system from the shitty pop radio they're playing to this and watch everyone get super strong in no time. —Kurt Morris (Coachhouse Collective, coachhousecollective.com)

ASHTRAY: The Power of Positive

Drinking: CD

The crust punk darlings of Santa Rosa deliver on their latest album. Their co-ed vocals, high octane chords, and drums kept me bouncing and singing along. They also made me thirsty with all their songs about PBR and vodka. I bet they're untamable live. Recommended. —Kristen K. (Silver Sprocket Bicycle Club, www.silversprocket.net)

ATTACK DISARM TAKEOVER:

Self-titled: CD

What we have here is Fresno's answer to the Varukers. They sound plenty pissed off and, having been to Fresno a few times, I can totally understand why. Pretty good stuff, all told. —Jimmy Alvarado (www.messmeuprecords.com)

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AUDACITY / PTERODACDUES: Split 7"
 Fantastically paired 7". Both bands play a frantic, spastic, trashy, and psyched out, freaked out mélange of pop, punk, rock'n'roll, metal, and hardcore. Both bands sound like they spend a fair amount of time sharing vans, stages, and chemical substances with the likes of Toys That Kill, Killer Dreamer, and Drinker's Purgatory, which I guess shouldn't really come as a surprise, seeing as this record is being put out by Small Pool Records. Comes with a lyric sheet to Ice Cube's "Today Was a Good Day," and, to top it off, there's a picture of Matty Awesome on the back cover. Check this shit out, dudes and chicks. —Jeff Proctor (Small Pool, myspace.com/smallpoolrecords)

AUSTIN LUCAS:

Somebody Loves You: CD

Man, Suburban Home is really moving down the alt country highway. Don't get me wrong, they are making great choices and Austin Lucas is no exception. Really solid songwriting and good vocals over very mellow folk/roots sounds is the ticket here. Joining labelmates Drag The River, Tim Barry, Two Cow Garage, this is a sound that lives and dies by songwriting. I say Austin Lucas is up to the challenge and I am interested in hearing more. —Mike Frame (Suburban Home)

AUTUMN PICTURE: *The Field*: CD

We can talk all we want about CDs being an absolutely dead format—that it's all about vinyl or digital downloads

these days. That's fine. At the same time, I've always been about five years behind the curve—technologically and otherwise—and I pretty much adore every goddamn thing about this disc. From a purely aesthetic standpoint, it's hand-numbered to 500 and comes in a beautiful chipboard package with black and blue silk-screens all over it. The booklet's inlaid with vellum, and, not to get too corny, that kind of dreamlike obfuscation of the photos and lyrics absolutely matches the ethereal quality of the music. Again, this is coming from a dude who still thinks tapes rule, but there's something admirable about the amount of stubborn care that was put into the physicality of this release. As far as the music itself, it's absolutely gorgeous. Think of the solemnity of Iron And Wine colliding with the dark but somehow joyous angles of Arcade Fire. Throw in some cello, farfisa, and trumpet, take note that at their lyrical core, these are intensely personal protest songs that any punk band would probably be stoked to belt out, throw in the fact that they're a DIY band, and you're looking at a terrific pop record with a stunning but subtle melancholic undercurrent. I don't know if this thing just hit me at the right time, but it's one of the best things I've ever received for review. —Keith Rosson (Hillbilly Stew)

AVENUE ROSE: *Electric: 7"*

I liked this record because of all of its glammy goodness. Included are three tunes that are straight-up catchy rock'n'roll, complete with

syncopated hand claps and clean-not-ponderous riffing. All in all, good stuff that effectively carries on the storied tradition of rocking out in the Pacific Northwest. —The Lord Kveldulfur (Slab-O-Wax)

AX, THE: *Our Queen of Dirt: CD*

Subtract twenty years and add overdriven Marshall stacks and this would've been massive with the proto-grunge Sub Pop crowd. Might not sound like a compliment in these post-Soundgarden days, but a compliment it was intended to be. —Jimmy Alvarado (Whoa! Boat)

BARRIKAD: *Where There Was Fire We Brought Gasoline: Cassette*

This tape, packaged in five by seven plastic audio box in order to include a copy of Gilles Dauve's *Critique of the Situationist International*, is a multimedia crash course in situationist leftism. This was an area of leftist and anarchist-leaning thought that started to brew in Europe in the late 1950s, which strikes some similarities with the American Beat movement. Side A begins with a British-sounding woman's voice explaining the human dilemmas that are symptomatic of capitalistic societies and then fades into a wall of white noise. I interpret this art as making a statement about our attachment to sloganizing in western songs and this is Barrikad's attempt to represent music made from anarchist principles. The noise includes natural events such as a train leaving, screams,

echoes within a tunnel, wind, and more. If you're looking for a mindfuck or are into noise, then this tape is worth a listen. —N.L. Dewart (Nil By Mouth, nilbymouthrec@gmail.com)

BASEMENT BLACK / DEAD MECHANICAL / PRETTY BOY THORSON AND THE FALLING ANGELS / THE MEASURE [SA]: *Dangerous Intersections II: 7" EP*

Basement Black: Jawbox by way of None More Black. Busy bits, chewed concrete vocals. Sounds more like the foundation underground than the soaring tops of buildings. I understand it's only one song, but want them to break free. Dead Mechanical: I really think DM is a band to watch and seek, but this song sounds like an onramp to a really kickass song coming right after it on the album. Build up, build up, build up, done. PBTatFA: Restrained, languid country ballad, played like it's the '50s: The super-fucked, racially divided blood-on-the-streets one, not the nostalgic, smiling Fonzie one. So even though it's quiet, there's murder in the throat. Much better than current country music that's designed to sell xenophobia and chrome ball sacks. The Measure [SA]: These folks are dear hearts, and I'm a neophyte when it comes to the recording process, but the song sounds strange—like an over-compressed music file—a couple hairs too fast and Lauren's voice sounds out of pitch... but, that said, the songwriting's great, as to be expected. —Todd (Traffic Street, trafficstreetrecords.com)

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BASEMENT BLACK: Recovery Stories and Worn-out Welcomes: CD-R

This was the pleasant surprise. Judging solely on the photocopied lyrics and artwork in a plastic sleeve and the spray painted CD-R, I assumed this was probably a crust or D-Beat album when I picked this up. Basement Black, instead, is melodic hardcore sung by dudes that sound like they have some serious facial hair and a bone to pick with the world. There's a definite Hot Water Music vibe going on, but unlike Young Livers or Bridge And Tunnel, I actually find the music interesting. There's some passion and immediacy to the proceedings that the aforementioned bands lack. At times I would say there are even traces of the Lawrence Arms more throat scratching moments and Tiltwheel showing up. The lyrics are also pretty good, to boot (although I'll be damned if I could make out more than half of them without the lyric sheet). I think this will only get better with repeated listens. —Adrian (Dead Broke)

BEFORE I HANG: Mississippi: CD

I hate to be a "judge a book by its cover" kind of guy, but I totally called this one. The cover depicts a slutty-looking redneck woman wrapped around a gallows like a stripper pole. Yep, I'm thinking tough guy Southern hard rock with a slight punk rock edge. I hit the nail right on the head here. Musically, it's heavy and driving. It really works in that Nine Pound Hammer vein, but then the guy starts yelling and ruins it for me. I can't put my finger on it exactly, but the sound of his voice made

me think of getting tested for an STD. In both cases the pain, both mentally and physically, lingers long after it's over. —Ty Stranglehold (Zodiac)

BLACK PANDA: Shake Me: 7"

Right away I liked this record, although, for the life of me, I can't really figure out why. It's not super original, but I think I'm enamored of the singer's voice, which, to me, is just a perfect blend of punk rock disinterest and snottiness. Quite lovely. The songs are not fast, but still pretty punk in a, hmm, I don't know... I was going to say "in a rock'n'roll-y" way, but let's just say "punk" and leave it at that. I like the second side the best and "Bluebird GHQ" is my fave. Also, the artwork is great—from the pictures on the actual record label itself (the middle part, where the hole is punched), to the cover and picture of the band (which is more like a weird outline of them), it's good stuff. Would love to see them live. Very enjoyable. Go get it! —Jennifer Federico (Super Secret)

BLACK TIME: Double Negative: CD

Minimalist, simple-riff trash rock with intentionally shitty production. The "aural assault as art" aesthetic quickly wears a bit thin, but it does appear that something catchy just might be buried deep down in all that noise. —Jimmy Alvarado (In the Red)

BLACKOUT BRIGADE:

Death and Dishonesty: CD

Ah, it's the old "trick the reviewer by the look of your CD trick." The dark

cityscape and calligraphy style band title had me thinking I was about to venture into the territory of grouchy, growly metal hardcore. I couldn't have been more wrong or more pleasantly surprised. The first song sounds as if you had Social Distortion getting wasted in the alley behind the club with Agnostic Front. Weird. After that early rough spot, it smoothed into good, if not standard, snotty punk that wouldn't sound out of place on TKO Records. Soaring guitars + Piss + Vinegar = A good record to tip a few beers to. —Ty Stranglehold (Insurgence)

BOB LOG III: My Shit Is Perfect: CD

Kicking, stumbling, lumbering one-man band Bob Log III continues his race-winning tradition in unusual *uno man-o* blues trash, playing slide guitar, drums, cymbal, and drum machine singing through a motorcycle helmet built-in telephone microphone. Great shit; all the lovable messy bump and grind from his first few solo records after Doo Rag but with a little more production, like the recent vibe of his *Log Bomb* album. I think I can understand the words now. Not terribly important though, as with classic titles "Goddamn Sounds Good Pt. 2," "Bang Your Thing at the Ball" and "You, or You and You, and Me." The ultimate moustache soundtrack if they ever remake Burt Reynolds' moonshine epic *White Lightning*. Only difference, Burt was completely serious in that. Bob is nothing but good humored fun and kicks. —Speedway Randy (Voodoo Rhythm, www.voodoorhythm.com)

BORN LIARS: Ragged Island: LP

BORN LIARS: Go Back One Day: 7" EP

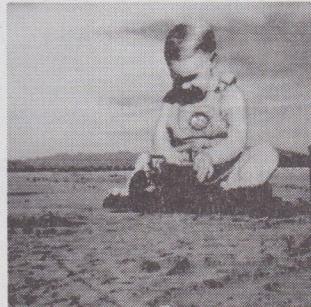
Funny how just a slight change of direction can make all the difference. Instead of following the tried and true path of a zillion Rip Off/Mummies/Supercharger clones off the cliff into faceless oblivion, these kids make an end run around all them other punks and turn in something more memorable simply by approaching the same material with a nod to '80s bands like the Lyres. The result loses none of the rawness or intensity, but the delivery is so much more assured, diverse and, I dunno, *real* than most peddling similar wares these days. Impressed is I. "Don't Tell Me, I Know" makes good use of the same chords as the Standells' "Sometimes Good Guys Don't Wear White," too. The 7" is more of the same, with two tunes from the LP and one that ain't. —Jimmy Alvarado (Cutthroat)

BRAINWORMS: II: Swear to Me: LP

BRAINWORMS: Tape: Cassette

The first thing that I heard from Brainworms was their split with Tubers. They presented one original and a Rites Of Spring cover. Their original sounded not too unlike ROS. Those two tracks, along with the tracks from their splits with Dynamite Arrows and Catalyst, appear on the cassette. After hearing an album and three splits' worth of material, though they stay in the realm of emotional hardcore, I can't say that Brainworms is simply Revolution Summer-esque. Think of ROS as a bookend with maybe Antioch

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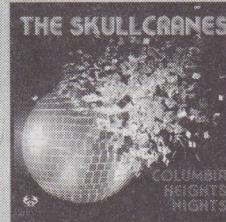
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Arrow on the other end of the shelf, but Brainworms' influences aren't used as a crutch to hold them up. Initially, their approach seems to be simply frantic and maniacal with vocals that never let up, remaining constantly abrasive. This comes through much clearer on the cassette. The LP has a calmer feel, which still isn't really calm. Still, on both the releases underneath the mania is a feeling of safety that comes with trust. It's as though Brainworms was jilted by the world and decided that, instead of issuing a directive of revenge, it was necessary to give a guiding hand through the madness by offering a taste of the lunacy to others via sound. Demented and passionate stuff, here. —Vincent (LP: Rorschach; Cass: People's Republic Of Rock And Roll)

BRAT ATTACK, THE: Those Who Sow Sorrow Shall Reap Rage: CD

Weird mix of hardcore, modern pop punk, and revolutionary rhetoric, right down to the Crass-styled stencil lettering and pictures of Molotov-chucking Sandinistas. Can't say I dug the music all that much, but I liked the fact that it's the first time in a good while that I heard anything resembling a Green Day song with lyrics about the prison industrial complex. —Jimmy Alvarado (Rebel Time)

BROKEDOWNS / TURKISH TECHNO: Split 7" EP

Brokedowns: How rad would it be if the Brokedowns got to sing at the funeral of George W. Bush instead of someone like

Huey Lewis? And then they got to shoot the M-16s at the end and use a string of flags as a slip'n'slide. I know that's coming from left field, but I think that'd be great. Maybe it's that their songs are serious laments—barky and staccato—but in a way that smells in the pits like a band that doesn't take themselves too seriously. Turkish Techno: Are getting more tightly wound with each release that comes through Razorcake HQ, and when they're spinning on the turntable, instead of picturing a hula girl on a dashboard, I see one Martin Ploy III, known to many of us as Party Marty, spilling half his beer, smiling his fuckin' face off, then yelling along to the band while pointing to their heads. They sound exactly like that. —Todd (Traffic Street)

BROWN SUGAR: Deportation: 7" EP

Sloppy, fly by the seat of your pants hardcore stuff. At times, they come dangerously close to sounding like early Gang Green, and the lyrics are almost as haiku-like in their simplicity: "wear a fuckin' sweater/the sun's turnin' off/bundle up real good/Armageddon gets me off/2012 nobody will keep us from havin' fun/party, party, party." They, thankfully, don't get silly with the speed, but still manage to pack quite a wallop. —Jimmy Alvarado (Feral Kid)

BURIED INSIDE: Spoils of Failure: LP

Reviewing a friend's record is always a bit of a daunting task, considerably more so when the entire band is comprised of people you grew up with, people you know much more deeply than on a simply

musical level. I wouldn't necessarily call it a conflict of interest, however. I'd like to think that anyone at this (or any) magazine would be above promotion for promotion's sake—I certainly am—and if you can know for a fact that a band's sentiments are genuine and passionate, not only through their lyrics, but from a firsthand account of their lifestyle, I think you're in as good a position as any, if not better, to give an accurate review. Born out of Ottawa, Canada's '90s hardcore community, spearheaded by groups such as Shotmaker, Uranus, Okara, and their Francophone counterparts in Drift, Jonah, and One Eyed God Prophecy, Buried Inside has evolved over four full-lengths (the last two on Relapse) from the chaotic sounds of its initial influences into a furious, pummeling combination of those aforementioned groups and more current purveyors of doom such as latter-era Neurosis. Their 2004 offering, *Chronoclast*, was a massive step forward in terms of songwriting and production (it was the band's first pairing with producer Matt Bayles, who also mixed this most recent release, with Converge's Kurt Ballou handling the recording process), and *Spoils of Failure* is yet another step forward in the band's evolution. While I'm personally a bit bummed by the near-complete abandoning of the frenzied, speedy passages that were characteristic of their earlier albums, there's no arguing that these are the best songs the band has crafted to date, and *Spoils of Failure* is certainly as lyrically thought-provoking as anything the band has done before. It's funny to know that these five guys

are giving the same chills to thousands of people around the world that they gave to a tiny basement full of their closest friends some ten years ago, and I'm positive *Spoils of Failure* is only going to add to that number. Great work, fellas. —Dave Williams (Relapse)

BUZZCRUSHER: Self-titled: CD

As long as I can remember, I've had a thing for Texas. I've never been there and I don't know why. When I was a kid, I was stoked that there was a town with the same name as me (Tyler), but as I got older and into music, I found that a lot of the bands I liked were from the Lone Star State: Big Boys, Butthole Surfers, D.R.I., Roky Erickson, ZZ Top, Geto Boys, Marked Men, Riverboat Gamblers.... There was always something about Texas bands that wasn't quite right in a good way and Buzzcrusher is no different. This here is heavy, down South rock punk. Songs about guns, getting wasted, being Texan, "scorin' dope from bikers," and a Discharge cover. Musically, these guys are falling in somewhere between Antiseen and Poison Idea. That's some heavy company, but Buzzcrusher fits in just fine. —Ty Stranglehold (Zodiac Killer)

CANDY SNATCHERS: Doin' Time: 7"

Wow, I didn't know these guys were still sluggin' it out. The two tunes here don't quite reach the manic froth I remember them hitting with past efforts, but they do show these boyos haven't lost their love for



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down'n'dirty rock'n'roll. —Jimmy Alvarado (Zodiac Killer)

CARA OCULTA DEL ROCK'N'ROLL, LA: Self-titled: 7" EP

The music's steeped in early Ramones pop simplicity. The lyrics *en español* consist of two lovey dovey tunes, one expressing a hatred of pizza and one professing only wanting to dance. Catchy and fun, which is never a bad way to go. —Jimmy Alvarado (TPV)

CASTING OUT, THE: *Go Crazy! Throw Fireworks!*: CD

I bet it totally sucks to be saddled with the albatross of your past endeavors. Dudes like John Lydon, Jesse Michaels, and Ian Mackaye have all continued—with varying results—to create music long after their initial trailblazing was done. And it's not that Nathan Gray (vocalist for The Casting Out and, previous to that, Boy Sets Fire) is necessarily up there in the tiers of musical history with any of those dudes, but unfortunately for him, his vocals are so instantly recognizable and distinct that it's virtually impossible to not compare his old band to his new one. Boy Sets Fire was once referred to in an old issue of *Heartattack* as Jon Secada fronting a hardcore band, which had more than a kernel of truth to it—the man *sings*—but was also pretty unfair: they mixed up the catchiness with some decent snarls, and much of what made that band initially *interesting* was Gray's unflinching, over-the-top melodies. Couple that with their aggressive political views and willingness to speak

about 'em—even if they sometimes looked like dumbasses in the process—and they were a band that people either loved or hated. There wasn't much of a middle ground. Unfortunately for The Casting Out, virtually everything that made Boy Sets Fire unique seems to have been chopped off and scooped out. I mean, the production here is smooth as shit, the band's incredibly tight, and at times they sound similar to bands like North Lincoln or Epitaph-era Hot Water Music. But with that way-huge melodic sensibility and Gray's signature pipes that'd easily put Greg Graffin's whoo-ohs to shame, there's really not a whole lot of kick and bite available. The whole album is just so frustratingly smooth and glossy. Lyrically, Gray's gone a lot more personal and introspective this time around, but the entire package—vocals and music combined—just comes across as so goddamn *sugary*. Again, there's that albatross—the comparison's certainly not fair to the rest of the members of The Casting Out, or Gray himself, but it's there nonetheless. *Go Crazy! Throw Fireworks!* leaves me wishing, ultimately, for less polish and more sneer, or at least for something vocally varied enough to act as a lifeline to pull me through these songs. The music's generally pretty good, but coupled with those vocals and relentless melodies, there are no rough-hewn edges to grab onto. It's just a smooth ride all the way through, which ultimately translates, at least to this listener, as a wholly unthreatening, uninteresting ride. —Keith Rosson (Fail Safe)

CAUSTIC CASANOVA: *Inminent Eminence*: CD

Track one is titled "Are We Doing This?", and is a weird, phased-out guitar experiment. From there, it goes back and forth from stuff like that, and some other stuff that kind of sounds like a more mid-tempo Bracket, with Fred Schnieder's third nephew singing. —Joe Evans III (Self-released)

CHAOS UK: *Kings for a Day—The Vinyl Japan Years*: 2 x CD

Bit of an odd listen here for me. I'm well versed in their early thrashomatic stuff and have kept informed enough over the years to know they still have a fondness for raising a ruckus, but some of the stuff here kinda came from left field. The first disc is primarily covers of tunes originally by PIL, Elvis Costello, Ian Dury, Plasmatics, the Drones, and others, some of which are actually pretty well done and funny at the same time. The other disc is a collection of EP tracks, including some more covers of Lurkers and Partisans tunes. The first block of originals sound more like oi-inspired tunes, which is a bit of a shock to those of us used to the raucous slam-bang these guys claimed as their signature sound. Just when you start wonderin' where all the noise went, they slap on the tracks from the *Kanpai* EP and you're back in familiar waters. On the whole, I can't say this was my favorite stuff by 'em, but it was definitely an interesting departure from the tried and true, most of which

they successfully pull off. —Jimmy Alvarado (www.cherryred.co.uk)

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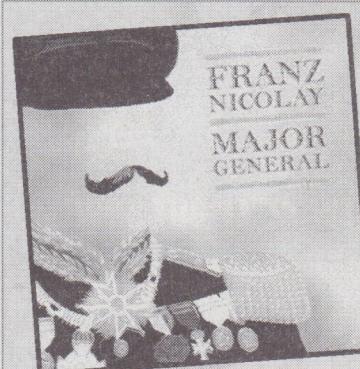
Volume 1: Souvenirs & Evidence: LP

Sounds a lot like Lee Ving singing for Motörhead or Antiseen, which might not sound that bad, but it's also not really that great, either. However, I must commend them on the line in the song "July of '68" that goes "I'm like McDonald's, baby, cheap and easy and laced with regret." What a fucking amazing line, wish there was more of that here. It is a nice looking record, gatefold sleeve, features a mug shot of Jane Fonda on the cover. Didn't realize we were still worked up over Jane Fonda these days. Overall, not a bad record but also not really what I'm looking for in a record. You folks out there who dig on the Confederacy of Scum bag should jump all over this, however. —Jeff Proctor (Mad At The World)

CHINESE TELEPONES:

Democracy: 2004-2008: CD

Interlace this review with The Ergs! *Hindsight Is 20/20* review. Perhaps since I didn't get to see the Chinese Telephones often, and the times that I did were special, it's hard for me to take that another "new" band that I put on the top shelf of DIY torch bearers is calling it quits. An incomplete way to describe the band is that they were the fibrous tissue connecting Screeching Weasel to the Potential Johns: a pop punk sensibility, perfectly "imperfect"



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recordings, hooked up to a biting, buzzing energy of a band that refused to print its lyrics. And, like The Ergs!, the Chinese Telephones were able to go into the then-empty pop punk cauldron and reconstituted it into a bubbling, wicked mass of sonic potions by knowing what to keep, knowing what unexpected ingredients to add, and what needed to evaporate into the past. So, in the end, the Chinese Telephones were and weren't pop punk. What they were was an honest, memorable step into larger shoes that are just sitting there, waiting for you to try them on so you can start dancing or use them as running shoes to jog into a slightly better mood. This collection of fifteen songs is a collection of all-previously-vinyl releases (7's and splits). It's not their whole kit and caboodle, but it does the job. Justin, please start a new band soon. —Todd (Sandwich Man)

CHRIS WOLLARD AND THE SHIP THIEVES: *Self-titled*: CD

This album is a departure from both Hot Water Music and Rumbleseat, i.e., not what I have come to expect from Chris Wollard. The vocal delivery is more relaxed and, at first, I feared this change. Car listening seemed eh, home listening seemed eh, but when I popped it in whilst at the beach, it instantly fit. This album is for the sunny, lazy, beach time with friends when you don't want to listen to music by people you fear may suck. Now, if you are not looking for a kicked back time, there may be

better selections for you. But if chill is what you're after, all you have to do is throw on this bad boy and you got it. —Jeremy Jones (No Idea)

CIVIL VICTIM: *Mehr Kreig: 7" EP*

Some pretty good hardcore from a band calling Germany home. Was a little apprehensive when I saw the lyrics were in English, but they managed to make their point(s) clearly. Fast, tempo changes abound; all around solid stuff here. —Jimmy Alvarado (Loud Punk)

CLOAK DAGGER: "Surf Song" b/w "Concentration Camps": 7"

A kickin' intersection of melodic hardcore and streetpunk. I bet they rip it live. The A-side is quite a feat—it's not a song so much as a collection of hooks in rapid succession. On the downside, I'm getting a "style over substance" vibe here, like maybe these guys shop at Urban Outfitters and "just wanna rock." It's on Jade Tree and there're only two songs. The lack of a lyric sheet doesn't help, neither does the fact that the B-side is called "Concentration Camps" and, from what I can make out, it's about girls. That's in really poor taste, dudes. —CT Terry (Jade Tree)

CREEPS, THE: *These Walls: 7"*

The Creeps' *Lakeside Cabin* was undoubtedly one of my favorite records of last year. It was a dark, slick pop punk affair reminiscent of mid-period Alkaline Trio and mid-

'90s Lookout! fare that totally caught me by surprise and became a staple of my daily listening. With their newest release, *These Walls* (once again on Black Pint Records), The Creeps chose to forgo the lengthy, detailed recording process of *Lakeside Cabin* for a rawer approach, and the result is, in my opinion, their best work yet. Gone are the campy, slasher flick lyrics of past releases and, instead, the band focuses on some uncharacteristically insightful commentary on the prison system, the international culture of fear, and the desperate state of daily life. Now, don't get me wrong when I say "uncharacteristically"—these are three smart guys, but their lyrical content up to this point has been much lighter. These songs are just on a whole other level. *These Walls* is catchy, cerebral punk rock that I can't recommend more highly. Get into this band immediately. —Dave Williams (Black Pint)

DAMNED, THE: *So, Who's Paranoid?: CD*

At this point in their career, I have to applaud the band for continuing to put out new music. Maybe they should call up The Circle Jerks? There's no "New Rose" here, but, overall, I found it to be enjoyable. The Captain still entertains on guitar and Vanian is still one of the coolest frontmen. What I really can't wait for is to see them again next month. Monty's spazzy dances will be worth the price of admission. "Maid for Pleasure" and "Little Miss Disaster" could slip into

the set list and still please the hardcore punters. For those who like to trip out, enjoy The Electric Prunes' "Dark Asteroid." Good work, men. Keep up the good work. —Sean Koepenick (English Channel)

DANGER STRANGERS: *Self-titled: 7" EP*

This is little looser in spots than, say, D.R.I. in their prime, and they come nowhere near warp factor nine, but these kids still crank out some punk rock that's speedy and catchy. Dunno shit about 'em, but ya gotta respect a band with a drummer named Little Drummer Troy. —Jimmy Alvarado (Small Pool)

DANIEL JAMES GANG: *In This City: 7"*

A moment of silence for the demise of the Chinese Telephones, please. What a band. Here is lead guitarist, Daniel James's effort. Is "dirt glam" a term? He's got the rough, technically proficient charge of a band like Nine Pound Hammer while images of the Sweet, Slade, and T Rex hang all over the place, like posters tacked onto a wall in the recording studio. It's also pretty obvious that the focal point of this band is the guitar. The a-side's a charging, catchy slab with a refrain that reminds me of the *Peanuts* theme song. The b-side could have been shorn in about half, increasing the quality of the cut. —Todd (Affiliated Publishing Situation, danieljamesgang.blogspot.com)

DARK LINGO: *Self-titled (?)*: Cassette
Dark Lingo is a duo of gents creating dark, moderately creepy,

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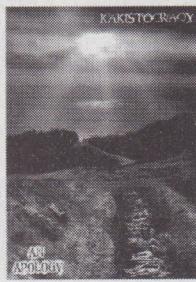


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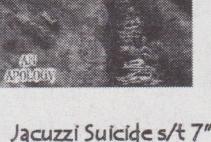
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and slightly experimental tunes with bass, drums, and effects. Such musical configurations can often be hit or miss, but this one hits very, very well. The six tunes on this tape tap into something dark and primal yet elegant at the same time, like a malevolent spirit with a kindly smile on its pate. Oh, and the packaging is friggin' awesome: cloth, hand-sewn cassette case. —The Lord Kveldulfr (Official Facss)

DAWN: Self-titled: CD

Song titles like "Proud to Be" and "Ragnarok" made me a little wary, but I see no evidence of any affinity for Teutonic dictators with Chaplin mustaches or calls for albino supremacy dolled up as the worship of one-eyed Nordic warrior gods. The music here is speedy, angry thrash stuff with lyrics bemoaning the state of the world in a way that doesn't sound like your average peace punk rant. —Jimmy Alvarado (Anti-Corporate Music)

DAYLIGHT ROBBERY: Red Tape: 7" EP

If Exene had married Joe Ramirez and joined the Eyes instead of X, this is pretty much what they would've sounded like. Songs are tight, sans fuzz on the guitar, and are about as on-target as a band can get. —Jimmy Alvarado (residuerecords@gmail.com)

DEAD MECHANICAL / FULL OF FANCY: Split 7"

Dead Mechanical's *Medium Noise* LP usually shows up on my turntable as I'm making the transition from Sunday

afternoon to Sunday night, mentally and physically preparing for the week ahead. This band just writes consistently solid and relatable songs. There's a definite warmth and comfort in them, even though these songs were spawned by the exact opposite of conditions. I will pick up anything this band releases. On the flip, Full Of Fancy play the fuck out of some pop music. The fuck, I say! —Daryl (Cold Feet)

DEAD MECHANICAL: A Great Lie: 7" EP

In a lot of ways, I don't envy DIY punk bands around today. Punk's history and legacy is like a huge tub of unconnected Legos dumped out and scattered on the floor. It's not enough to click together the Dag Nasty brick to the Dillinger Four base piece and say, "It's an airplane!" because people will call you naïve or retarded. With thousands of little bits to put together in the imperfect world of jobs, flakey people, and limited resources—to build something spectacular, yet referential to previous history—is fuckin' hard. Dead Mechanical have made a Lego diorama, replete with Baltimore's skyline and a little band playing in a basement. They've even somehow got the Lego dudes sweating. And it's rad. Rad in a way that, even with a deep knowledge of punk history, sounds familiar, but newly realized, fresh, and explosive. It's like Dead Mechanical had somehow never heard of (pre-*Field Day*) Dag Nasty or Dillinger Four, but channeled the same awesome Lego-building spirit of both. Highly recommended. —Todd (Sex Cells, sexcellsrecords.com)

DEATH: For the Whole World to See: CD

I've always had this thing where I obsess about things that I love. I obsess to the point where I try to gain an encyclopedic knowledge of the given subject. Some of these things are horror movies, *Star Wars*, comic books, beer, and, most of all, punk rock. That said, I had never heard of Death until my father-in-law clipped an article out of the paper for me. The story blew me away. Three brothers from Detroit in the early 1970s start playing what would, in coming years, be known as punk rock. They eeked out a 7" and promptly disappeared. Flash forward to today. The master tapes for seven songs have been discovered and released on Drag City. When I put this on, I didn't know what to expect and was quickly blown away. The first thing that struck me was how much singer Bobby Hackney sounds like HR (I know that the Bad Brains connections are inevitable due to both bands being African-American, but, damn, they sound alike). The music is literally the missing link between the proto punk bands like MC5 and The Stooges and the likes of the Ramones and what would come afterwards (I kept thinking about The Zeros and Radio Birdman when listening to it). It often grooves like '70s rock under the surface, but the speed and the politicized lyrics really prove that Death (having recorded these songs in 1975) could really be the first true punk rock band. I'm still trying to pick the pieces of my mind up off the floor! —Ty Stranglehold (Drag City)

DEATHCAGE: Chaos Nightrider: 7"

I'm one of those people who have a lot of worship for Japanese punk, mainly because of my heritage and, at the time of my youth, it was a hard to get many of the records that were coming out of Japan. When I hear a mention that a band from another country has the Japanese sound, I am skeptical. But boy did this one blow the shorts off me. Here is a band from Australia that gets strong mention for their Japanese sound and they sound better than many of the bands that are famous for the genre of Burning Spirits. From first listen, you can here the dead-on musicianship of the players who play a mixed blend of speed metal meets crust punk. The first thought that popped in my head was that this band almost is too talented to be playing this style of music. They are that good. The vocal delivery is wallowing in the sheer brink of loss of self-control and wailing with genuine energy. Package that all together and it's one record that shines. Being the second release from this band, I now have to add their debut to my long list of wants that I currently can't afford to purchase. —Donofthedead (Schizophrenic)

DEVO: Watch Us Work It: 12" Single

Being a worshipper of the Energy Dome for quite some time, I found myself pleasantly surprised by Devo releasing their first chunk of vinyl since 1990. Sure, the song was used in a computer company's ads, but the bottom line is that it rocks. The thumping bass is the thing that grabs me the most. I kept

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thinking about Nomeansno because of it, and it totally makes sense to me. The two bands share a huge overlap musically. I can't get enough of this song (especially the Teddybears mix). The single features a few different versions of the song and a Devo remix of The Attery Squash's "Devo Was Right About Everything." The song is kind of lame, but the lyrics are perfect. I just heard that our spud boys are gearing up for a new record in the fall, and this single really has me jerkin' back and forth in anticipation. -Ty Stranglehold (MVD Audio)

DIABLOS BLONCOS, EL: *Dancing to Contusions: 7" EP*

A-side consists of three helpings of synth/drum machine-derived noise. B-side is more of the same, although, according to the insert, was generated with the standard bass/drum/guitar setup. All of it's pretty atonal and minimalist, but still occasionally odd enough to be interesting. -Jimmy Alvarado (El Diablos Bloncos)

DIE PRINCES DIE: *Lions Eat Lions Deluxe: CD*

I caught these guys live at Part Time Punks around 2006. They weren't the band I went to see, but they ended up being the band I remember, as they ripped it up and put on a great show, leaving the band I came for in the dust and, now, long forgotten. Die Princess Die are noisy, spastic, angular, disjointed, and catchy. The rhythms are nervous, while almost danceable. They

take disparate musical styles like post hardcore, techno, rock, and new wave and mix them up into something new. "The Racer" starts off with keyboard loop, then builds with heavy percussion, guitars, and other sounds coming in, to make the song soar, and never lose the overall tone of the song. "Lights of the Night" sounds heavily influenced by gabber; pumping beats, noisy bursts, then the drums come in, changing first impressions. One of my favorite songs here is "Young Lady, Your Tail Is Showing". It's mainly mid tempo, and has a dark, low rhythm that's cool and sinister. Lazy comparisons would be !!! meets Arab On Radar with a little Moving Units and Rocket From The Crypt. But really, Die Princess Die are their own entity. Give 'em a listen, and go see them live. Originally released on GSL in 2006, this version also includes their *Cut Lips* LP. -M.Avg (Uproar For Veneration)

DINOSAUR AND THE MISSING LINK: *Self-titled: 7"*

Here we have some two-man trash punk from Seattle. Dinosaur is handling the guitars and vocals and the Missing Link is rocking the drums. I love this record! It's so snotty, so minimalist, yet in your face and kicking you in the balls. Add some hilarious lyrics and we have ourselves a winner! Somehow, in my mind's eye, I'm imagining a mutant hybrid of The Regulations and The Evaporators, and that can't be bad! -Ty Stranglehold (Milk n' Herpes)

DOPAMINES / TILL PLAINS: Split 7"

The Dopamines play fast, catchy, gruff-voiced punk rock. Their two songs here are pretty cool. Till Plains have more of an At The Drive-In feel. They're okay. Worth it for the Dopamines side, for sure. -Ryan Horky (It's Alive)

EL BANDA: Wisi Mi: 7"

This is a great follow-up release from this Warsaw, Poland band who put out the wonderful debut LP, *Przejdzcie ci*. This time around they seem to have grown from their dark melodic hardcore beginnings and are pushing the envelope in growth. The first side starts off with a dark mid-tempo number that reminded me a lot of the now-defunct Signal Lost: charging female vocals on top of the rhythmic chords shows power without resorting to the use of speed. The second track, being more melodic, reminded me, for some reason, of the playfulness of one of those '80s new wave bands that I used to see on MTV when they actually showed videos. It's by far my favorite track on the whole release. Flip this baby over and they show that they have not lost their punk edge. The last track closes off the experience with a massive gang chorus backed by more of a rock-edged tune. If Post Regiment, La Fraction, The Assassimators, Utopia, or the many other female-led punk bands is your thing, you need to get one of these. (The exchange rate of the US Dollar is decent to the Polish Zloty.) -Donofthedead (Pasazer)

ENVIRONMENTAL YOUTH CRUNCH: *Vicious Fishes: Cassette*

Apparently, this Florida outfit has now changed their name to the title of this release. The first three songs kick this puppy into overdrive. But then, a cover song which can only be filed under "bad career move": a cover of the *Friends* theme song, Ugh! I'm not able to get visions of that goofball Ross out of my head until "Hobo's Lullaby" slides on and saves this record. Might want to leave that one off the repress, dudes. -Sean Koepenick (People's Republic)

EPIDEMICS : Waking up the Dead: LP

They have a definite retro sound, somewhere around the whole '77 thing, without being a cartoon caricature of the style. Mid tempo, poppy, and roots in rock'n'roll. These guys can write a well-crafted song, are adept at their instruments, and the singer can really sing. It's crazy. Makes one wonder why they're trying their hand at the whole punk thing. Yeah, the answer is obvious, but still... I hear influences from the Undertones and the Buzzcocks in their sound: upbeat, driving, and unbelievably catchy. The song "City Of Desire" is instantly memorable. Hauntingly familiar and the chorus will burn into your memory in seconds. Just like the Buzzcocks, the Epidemics sing songs of loss and yearning in a style that is oddly happy. With few exceptions, I prefer punk to be on the slash and burn end of things, something these guys are definitely not, and the thing is, this is pretty f'n

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good. You really can't go wrong with this album. A definite keeper. —M. Avrg (Ny Vag / Thrashbastard, www.nyvag.com, thrashbastard@yahoo.de)

ERGS!, THE:

Hindsight Is 20/20, My Friend: 2 X LP

I call bullshit on the title. The Ergs!, to me, always had better eyesight (musically, not optically) than most bands. From the first time I heard the *Ben Kweller* EP, it was obvious that these guys were doing far more than just flaunting the bare minimum of pop punk flair. And to borrow a Maddy cereal analogy, as a vast aisle of pop punk had found its boxes open and its marshmallow bits stale from overexposure and passing their "please open by" date, the Ergs! skirted that dusty crumble of a career path by stretching to SST and New Alliance, and were unafraid to uncork a hardcore blast then lay back into a country groove. And they did this while never losing their own identity as a band or sounding like an absolutely shitty joke everyone's waiting to end. At the time they found themselves on *Razorcake* #23's cover, few folks on the West Coast had heard of them. When Megan Pants interviewed them, they were sorta baffled why someone three thousand miles away from New Jersey would even care about a nerdy trio. So, I feel sick to my stomach. Because—wrong or right—I still consider the Ergs! a new band, a band that held up one of the torches of a new vanguard of punk's possibilities. I mean, I should be happy for them, blow a paper horn,

like at a retirement party. They're going out with a bang of a collection of their widely scattered vinyl offerings in a handy and attractive gatefold, in a Grand Funk Railroad-style double LP. But I'm not ready to be rememberin'. I'm ready for the next full length. I'm ready for an Ergs!-themed cereal (probably on the lines of Crōonchy Stars). I'm ready for a line of Ergs!-inspired poorly fitting eyeglasses. One of the foolish pitfalls of being a music reviewer is transposing one's own will and wishes as a serious directive to a band, especially a band that I've learned from and listened to so much. So, besides suggesting the title should have been *Foresight Is 20/10*, I wish them all the best and hope this knot in my stomach lessens up soon. I feel like shit. —Todd (Dirtnap)

ERGS, THE: *That's It... Bye: 12"EP*

At first, I was thinking, "What hubris. What excess." I mean, I like improved sound quality as much as the next person who values records over clothing and I'm a huge fan of the 12" 45 format, but a three-song 12" that isn't *Tarkus*-inspired jams? C'mon, dudes, I know it's impressive that you played back-to-back sets at the Fest to thousands of people, but that's no reason to slap your vinyl/dongs in other bands' faces. These three songs could have handily fit on a 7" 45. It wouldn't even have to go to 33. Think about the whales, Sally Struthers, dolphins and Al Gore, man. Then, before uncorking my bile-sprayer, I found out that the 7" machine at the plant that was pressing the record had broken. The only solution

to getting this swan song out on time was to press the biggest (in size) 7" in history. I'm still not comfortable in this post-Ergs! world. It kinda sucks, but thanks for three more songs. I hope none of you join Guns'n'Roses. —Todd (Don Giovanni, www.dongiovannirecords.com)

EXPLOITED, THE: *Punk's Not Dead/ Onstage: 2 x CD*

EXPLOITED, THE: *Troops of Tomorrow/ Apocalypse Tour 1981: 2 x CD*

These perennial punk releases get yet another reissuing, this time in two-CD sets. I'm figuring there are few reading this not well acquainted with this long-standing buncha Scottish punks, but just in case, spread on these two releases are their first two LPs plus assorted singles cuts, and two early live albums. The music remains as angry and fresh as when it was first unleashed, and it's clear how and why so many of the current crop of parrot punks have drawn influence from them. While it's been some time since I've found much of anything by Wattie and crew interesting or particularly pointed, this stuff still sounds plenty mean and gets the blood boiling in all the right ways. —Jimmy Alvarado (www.cherryred.co.uk)

FROM THE DEPTHS: *Germinate: CD*

I honestly thought this day might never come. After the quiet dissolution of Requiem, whose *Storm Heaven* LP remains one of my favorite crust records of the past ten years, I feared there might never be another post-Catharsis

project to quench my thirst for melodic, melodramatic hardcore. Then, on one of my increasingly less-frequent trips to the Crimethinc Ex-Workers Collective website I saw it: a new music release. There was little time between realizing Brian's involvement in this new project and my purchase of *Germinate*. And while From the Depths takes a decidedly Crass-ier approach than Catharsis or Requiem, the essential elements are still in place. The theatrical, poetic lyrics; Brian's seething growl coupled with soaring female vocals; typical, melodic D-Beat portions; it's everything I could've hoped for. Essentially, if you liked Requiem, I doubt you'll be disappointed. Likewise, if you've got a Flux Of Pink Indians patch on your filthy jacket, you'll probably be pretty stoked. I certainly am. —Dave Williams (Crimethinc)

FUCKED UP: *II: Cassette*

This tape is so very, very great. It just blows my mind. I bought it when they played in Tijuana, in a room with no ventilation or windows above a café whose owner forced us to keep the door closed to control the noise. This tape will always remind me of that night. Listening to this on the drive home, it actually felt like they were live on air. They cover a Nirvana song, they talk mad shit beautifully, get interviewed in Spanish, and just rule as only they can. Ghostface does a spot! This showcases their wild range, not only of musical ability, but of taste as well. It's like a podcast from all around the world. There isn't a band out there that can

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bring the brutal assault that these guys are still carrying around in that crowded van. —Rene Navarro (Deranged)

FULL OF FANCY:

Every Wall in the Parlor: 7"EP

It's been staring me in the face for awhile now. It's so obvious, especially hearing four songs in a row. (I believe everything else I've heard from Full Of Fancy has been splits.) Full Of Fancy reminds me of two words. Lisa Marr: the lady behind both Cub and Buck. Smart, bubbly pop nuggets of punk that, on the surface, may sound "cuddlecore," but have a real itchiness under the dermis, located in a place that can't easily be scratched, which gives them a nice depth beyond the obvious whipped topping and prancing unicorns on the top. Very good stuff. —Todd (Cold Feet)

GET BENT: Demo: 7"

Being a fan of demos-gone-7", I was pleased to see these songs get pressed to vinyl. Because not only are 7"s just funner to listen to, but the artwork for the original demo was completely uncaptivating. Even just adding two stock file photos of life in New York City adds volumes to these four songs of melancholic, emotive, melodic punk that's rich in leads and sick with personal revelations. —Daryl (Dead Broke / Dirt Cult)

GG KING: Adult Rock: 7"

Nothing wrong with a little self-satirizing. Members of the Carbonas/

Gentleman Jesse lay down two tracks of punked-out pop with what I presume to be humorous lyrics, but I can't understand a word of what's being said. As long as the tracks are this catchy, I don't really care who they're clowning on, though. —Daryl (Douchemaster)

GORDON GANO'S ARMY:

Self-titled: LP

Hot off the heels of their 7"s, this English trio slows it down a notch. At first, it threw me. It feels more "tea" than "coffee." Some of the songs are longer and more languid. I listened to the record a couple times, then put it aside, not quite sure what to think, but willing to give them another chance. What a difference a couple of weeks made. Just as seeds planted at the right time sprout almost instantly, the songs quickly budded and revealed their easy, softer beauty on these return visits to the vinyl. The doves are in the details. Gordon Gano's Army's music resonates with a wide-eye wonder (while the lyrics motor through darker tunnels), incorporating a Superchunkian sense of melody. They exercise the patience for a song to breathe and climax. What they gave up in straight-ahead, rough-and-tumble early-Jam raucousness they more than make up with the comfort that you're in the hands of crackerjack songwriting. My working knowledge of current Britpop is nonexistent, but if the following terms aren't mutually exclusive, GGA's a non-twee, non-precious, unstyled DIY band playing pretty songs with a thick-knit British accent. Maybe a closer-fitting moniker

would be "office worker punk," lyrically parked in the lot next to Canada's Statues, waiting until the exact last minute before the workday starts to get out of the car, smacking the steering wheel, singing along to songs as a form of therapy. —Todd (Art Of The Underground)

GROINOIDS: *Radiobeat Sessions*: 7" EP

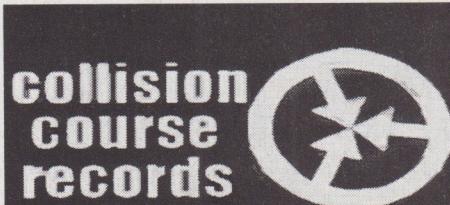
I remember gettin' the *Boston Not L.A.* comp at Roadhouse Records not too long after it came out. Although I was immediately drawn to the über-hardcore of Jerry's Kids and Gang Green, the tune that had the most lasting impact was "Angel" by the Groinoids. Why? They sounded so completely unhinged rather than just pissed off. Simple riff, singer screaming "Chef's gonna boil," and it sounded like he'd be just the kinda motherfucker that would crank the oven up and dance around while the unnamed chef did just that. Outside of one other tune, "Empty Skull," that appeared on the *Unsafe at Any Speed* comp, I don't think they ever released anything else and remain one of the more obscure Boston bands from the early '80s hardcore scene. Well, it appears someone agreed with my estimation and saw fit to release this five-track collection of tunes recorded for those vaunted compilations of yore, and sweet crispy Christus, is it good. Why on earth Modern Method, XClaim! or any of those other labels back then never saw fit to release this in its entirely back this is a fuggin' mystery, 'cause this is a veritable hardcore masterpiece, a nice bookend

to, say, the Mentally Ill's *Gacy's Place* EP, just as loud and heavy as anything SSD produced in their prime, but with an extra dose of weird to give it some pizzazz. Word is a CD is on the way, and I'm hoping they see fit to send it this way, 'cause I'm gonna wear the grooves down on this pretty goddamned quick. —Jimmy Alvarado (www.i-dealrecords.com/fatalist)

GUILTY HEARTS:

Pearls Before Swine: CD

Sounds like my old buddy Hermann Senac (full disclosure alert: he produced Our Band Sucks' EP while I was still in the band and we have shared more than a few bills and beers over the past nearly twenty years) has found himself another doozy of a band to get mixed up in. For anyone familiar with his résumé, which includes such genre bending punk outfits as Blood On The Saddle, Crowbar Salvation, Skull Control, Bea Pickles, Groovy Rednecks and others, that this latest endeavor is equally resistant to fitting into some simple pigeonhole should come as no surprise. This time 'round he and his cohorts—Leon Catfish, Edgar Rodriguez, and Gabriel Hammond—are strip mining a melding of '60s slop, sludgy Scientists swampland scree, Gun Club slide-happy roots punk, and maybe even a dash of early Dream Syndicate punkadelia (compare "Seven Days" here to the Syndicate's "Days of Wine and Roses"). The results are brooding, heavy, at times almost trance-like, always right on point and



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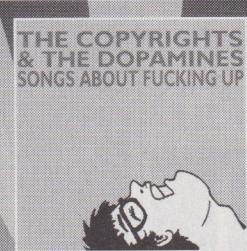
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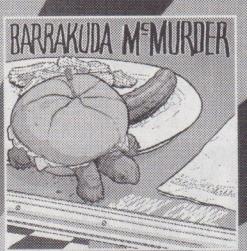


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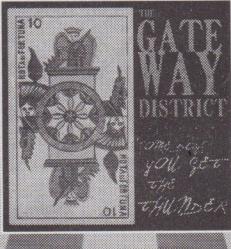
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rarely nothing short of brilliant. With slack-jawed reverence I bask in the awesomeness evidenced here and can't wait to witness these monstrous Hearts live. —Jimmy Alvarado (www.voodoorhythm.com)

HOMBRINUS DUDES: *Politi-Kill*: CD

I'm more of a let's go-see-a-grind-band than let's-go-listen-to-grind kind of guy. But I do buy it from time to time and do listen to it on occasion. Here is band I definitely would check out at a show. Two-man band, I dig that. They play fast. Check. But wait, their lyrics are thought provoking and political. Big plus. Reminiscent of early Napalm Death and Terrorizer. Cool in my book. A thinking man's grindcore puts this band a level above the imitators. —Donofthedead (Punks Before Profits)

HORNY VAMPYRE: *Self-titled*: 10"

This sounds like it was made for kindergarteners on ecstasy. Casio sounds + drum machine dance beats + two annoying vocalists = Horny Vampyre. Borrowing from Dr. Zoidberg, "The music is bad, and you should feel bad." —Vincent (Hidden Apparatus)

HUL: *Den Danske Ungdom...: LP*

This record reminded me a lot of fellow Danish bands Amdi Petersens Armé and No Hope For The Kids, which I was comfortable with because both those bands are great. Then I found out that Hul contained members of Amdi Petersens Armé, NHFTK, and the Young Wasteners before they

played in any of those other bands. While harnessing the power that would be in full effect in later bands, Hul is still punk-as-nails, but spazzy and noisier, not to mention more youthful sounding, hence the title which translates to "*The Danish Youth*." If you're a fan of any of the Danish bands mentioned above (which, of course, you are, right?), this is a piece of the puzzle that's definitely worth listening to. —Daryl (Hjernespind)

HUNCHES: *Exit Dreams*: CD

Gotta hand it to the In The Red folks; they sure know how to pick 'em. These kids are mining the gray area between hardcore, art-noise, and '60s trash and sprinkling a woozy sensibility all over their efforts. One's opinion of said efforts depends on one's taste for such things, but few would be able to argue against the fact that they make one fucker of a racket. —Jimmy Alvarado (In The Red)

INSOMNIAXE: *No Sleep*: CD

Insomnixae have a fairly standard psychobilly sound, but it doesn't really come off as pedantic or run-of-the-mill. It gets close at times, mind you, but, overall, I thought that this was a decent outing on their part. I think the reason that I'm not quite astounded by this is because I want Insomnixae to be tighter; on several of the tunes when they kick things into overdrive and the Fest of the Slapping of the Doghouse Bass begins, it's as if they need a few seconds to figure out what tempo they

want to be playing. But once they get a bit further into the tune, then everything is fine. I guess I just want a better sense of consistency. Given a bit of time, though, I think Insomnixae could really be something—they've got the chops, but they need to carve the roost more precisely. —The Lord Kveldulfr (Zodiac Killer)

JERK WARD: *Too Young to Thrash*: LP

Jerk Ward was a hardcore band that formed in Victoria BC, Canada in 1982. They came up in a scene alongside the likes of The Neos, Nomeansno, and Dayglo Abortions, and although they may not have gained the notoriety of their luminaries, they easily stood alongside them as one of the best bands in Victoria. Not bad for a thirteen-year-old and a couple of fourteen-year-olds! As most hardcore bands of the era, Jerk Ward was all but finished by 1985, having recorded a cassette (Flesh & Bones) and several demos. This record compiles these songs and presents them for the first time on vinyl. Spastic and angry, yet soaked with humor, the songs do stand the test of time and then some. This is truly a gem of a bygone era that is well worth picking up from both a historical standpoint as well as an unbelievably rockin' one. —Ty Stranglehold (Supreme Echo)

JOHNNY THROTTLE:

Stukas Über Shoreditch: 7"

Now this is what I'm talking about! Rockin' punk that brings to mind the likes of Smut Peddlers, The Fakes,

Broken Bottles, or any number of the Hostage Records types of bands. Gang back ups, a touch of piano here and there, and a helping of hand claps in the mix and you get the idea. I can't get enough of this! That's it Johnny Throttle, you're on my list. I want more! —Ty Stranglehold (Wrench)

JKUEBOX ZEROS:

Rock N Roll Ronin: CDEP

I have been waiting for this record for too damn long. The first EP and full length by this band are two of the very best records of this decade and still get regular spins round my house. I am glad to say that this new six-songer stacks up right along the others. Released by the king of all tastemakers, Mr. Pat Todd, this new disc sounds right at home on Rank Outsider Records. There are elements here of many of the greats: hints of Dictators, Radio Birdman, Ramones, Zeros, and Saints can be heard. Not actively attempting to ape anyone, the Jukebox Zeros bring to mind those great bands because they are themselves an amazing band. Fans of the Humpers, Lazy Cowgirls, Jeff Dahl, Joneses, and other rockers are going to want to be all over this. —Mike Frame (Rank Outsider, www.rankoutsiderrecords.com)

KIM PHUC: *Wormwood Star*: 7"

An interesting mix of arty sludge and thuddy punk delivered with a nice ladling of attitude. Trying to find a comparison, and one's right on the tip of my brain; but I can't

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quite pull it from the depths, which I guess is a good enough way of sayin' what these guys are peddlin' ain't as easily pigeonholed as others. —Jimmy Alvarado (Criminal IQ)

KOROVA: *Another Happy Customer*: CD

Remember thinkin' the 45 they put out was a nice bit of hardcore in its "we recorded this in the living room" glory, and that assessment would fit nicely here as well. The songs are infused with a bit more Black Flag thud than few others seem to bother with, giving the loose delivery here a bit more heft, and what I can make of the lyrics, they don't seem overly dopey, which is a blessing unto itself. —Jimmy Alvarado (Korova)

KUNG FU KILLERS: #1 of 5 Singles: 7"

KUNG FU KILLERS: #2 of 5 Singles: 7"

KUNG FU KILLERS: #3 of 5 Singles: 7"

KUNG FU KILLERS: #4 of 5 Singles: 7"

KUNG FU KILLERS: #5 of 5 Singles: 7"

Ten tracks of punk rock with varying tempos spread over five singles. The music ain't all that bad and it's snotty enough that it's clear they don't take themselves too seriously; no surprise considering the folks allegedly responsible for this mystery band. The artwork is top-notch, with each cover connecting to the next to make a larger picture. Limited to 300, too. —Jimmy Alvarado (Zodiac Killer)

LANDLORD:

A Box Uh Rocks: Cassette

This originally felt like a lot to digest: twenty-four tracks of music comprised

of two full-length albums (*Lifers* and *No Matter Where You Live*) on one cassette. Yet, the more I listened to it, the shorter it got; to the point that what once felt overwhelming now feels just right. This is some seriously great punk music with heavy pop elements. It's got great trembly vocals that pierce through the surrounding music to deliver some captivating lyrics. Without a lyric sheet, I'm left to pick up random lines as I go, which, in a way, accentuates the songs. They become a great phrase wrapped in sonic beauty and lyrical mystery. This music makes me want to be at a crowded house show, where everything is too hot save the beer in my hand, restlessly waiting for my chance to scream along, "I'm not a callous man, I just have shallow tastes." —Rene Navarro (The People's Republic Of Rock And Roll)

LANDLORD: *Lifers*: LP

Lazy basement punk from this Bloomington, IN, three-piece, which features members of Defiance, Ohio. Fourteen tracks on this album, released on the Pink Razors' Houseplant Records. Sounds like a party where you stand on the front porch, sharing drinks and stories with old friends while your favorite band plays inside the house. Cult of Mascis slackerdom infests the guitars and the vocals meet Toys That Kill head-on in a pop-smothered jam. —Jeff Proctor (Houseplant)

LANTERNS, THE: *Postcard Picture*: CDEP

Not quite pop punk nor power pop, but it is definitely lady fronted. For

some reason, I want to say there's a noticeable Cheap Trick influence to them. The only complaint I have is that it felt like some of the songs ran too long, when it seemed like they could've been broken into two songs, but, other than that, it's not bad. —Joe Evans III (Cheapskate)

LIBYANS: *Crash Course*: 7"

I do really like the Libyans and think that *Welcome to the Neighborhood* is an excellent EP. They occupied the musical land between Dangerhouse (the label, not Dangerfield, the dude) and Charles Bronson (the band, not the dude), eliciting great '77 punk chops while adding a definite power and violent crunch to their music's bloodstream. The title track to this single, I wish I could play it at 48 or 49 instead of 45 as an experiment because it sounds more lurching, plodding, and restrained than running, leaping, and capturing. There are even a couple times when the song just sounds off. The b-side, at one-third the length of the title track, speeds the affair back up, but doesn't quite capture the previous magic. And I want it to, so badly. —Todd (Headcount / Too Circle / Shock To The System, thelibyans@gmail.com)

LIGHTS OUT!: *Destroy/Create*: CD

While this isn't the second coming of Black Flag like the press sheet stuff implies, it does sound a lot like Ron Reyes fronting a really hyper German garage band (especially because of that weird '60s overdriven-but-not-really-

distorted guitar tone). This is pretty damn good actually, and everything on here is really short and sweet. I also like the singer's slurred yet somehow over-enunciated bark and the extremely sweet-sounding bass. The more I sit with this, the more I like it. I think people with short attention spans everywhere would really like this band. —Adrian (Dead Beat)

LITTLE LUNGS: *Hoist Me Up!*: 7"

New York/New Jersey three-piece with shared female vocals (occasionally sung together, which is my favorite). They'll likely disagree with me, because they seem like they're probably tough chicks, but it sounds kind of like a cheer and I think that's really neat. There are echoes of '90s college rock acts like Archers Of Loaf and Superchunk, with touches of modern basement punk. Brilliantly catchy, instantly loveable. Effortless strumming, personal and soulful lyrics, and somewhat off-kilter but heartfelt vocals always hit their mark. Would likely pair well with fellow lady-fronted New York popsters, the Besties. This comes highly recommended. —Jeff Proctor (Salinas)

LIVING WITH LIONS:

Dude Manor: CDEP

After thirty seconds of listening, I was sure I was going to hate this. I immediately leaned toward a whole slew of mall punk, white-belted comparisons, but I'm glad I didn't jump the gun. Living With Lions have a lot more in common

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with Hey Mercedes and Moneen than they do that phony baloney haircut stuff. Take the quirky melodies of those two bands and add some early Saves the Day-esque fast parts and breakdowns and you'd be pretty close. It's obvious that these guys are no strangers to the late '90s/early 2000s' emo school, but they put a refreshingly upbeat spin on things. I'm actually way into this. —Dave Williams (Black Box)

MADELINE: White Flag: CD

This appears to be an Elephant 6 related group/project from Athens, Georgia. It is a very strong album, coming on something like indie pop/twee with some alt country elements. I think this record will be getting a lot of spins as it is right up my alley. I am hearing parts that remind me of Rose Melberg, Kimya Dawson, and much of the Elephant 6 collective in the sound. There is a whole lot here to make Madeline stand out on their own, and I only use those comparisons as a reference point. Really great vocals and strong songs are all I care about and this album has those in spades. —Mike Frame (Orange Twin)

MALACHI: Self-titled: CD

Sludgy, loooooong metal tunes very much in the post-Sabbath vein. —Jimmy Alvarado (Halo Of Flies)

MARKED MEN / BIRTHDAY SUITS:

Split 7" EP

I don't know about reincarnation after this lifetime, but the musical version

can reap great rewards. Reel the clock back a little shy of a decade and members of both outfits—as The Reds and Sweet J.A.P. (cover of *Razorcake* #18)—shared a split 7". I don't know about the transcendence of souls, but I do know that both the Marked Men (cover of *Razorcake* #22) and Birthday Suits continue to improving listeners' quality of life in tangible ways. Marked Men: Okay, so Jeff Burke sings on the cover of Sweet J.A.P.'s "Oh My Pretty Face." Sweet J.A.P. was mostly comprised of Japanese dudes living in the Midwest. Now Jeff is living in Japan. Coincidence? Perhaps I'm living in denial, but I'm placing the Marked Men in the "indefinite hiatus" brain file instead of "broken up." Birthday Suits: Spazzy, two-piece Teengenerate-based rock'n'roll with a Shellshagian art bend. What a tidy, explosive mess they make, sounding much bigger and octopus than just a duo. The goocher is that by the time this review sees print, this sucker'll be totally sold out and hard to find and/or Ebay-dumb-expensive. That's one thing I'm sure of. —Todd (Nice and Neat)

MARKED MEN: Ghosts: CD

When the last Marked Men record came out (*Fix My Brain*) I was kind of bummed out. It sounded different from the previous records and it was weird to me. I was talking to Todd about it and in his sage-like way told me to give it a chance to grow on me. Nowadays, that disc is in rotation around here more often than

not. Well, here we are with another disc from our boys in Denton and I am pleased to report that there is no "growing period" needed here! This baby flat-out rocks! I've more or less lived and breathed *On the Outside* for a few years now, and I've got to say that this one is quickly climbing up to that level. It's like the aural equivalent of crushing up and snorting a bunch of pep pills and washing them back with endless beers with the one you love... Comfortably on edge! Now the sad part is that it sounds like this is going to be the last Marked Men record we get for a long while. That sucks. —Ty Stranglehold (Dirtnap)

MIDDLE CLASS, THE: Out of Vogue—The Early Material: LP

One of my favorite things about hardcore is when old codgers who have been into it for too long will get bored with life and begin extolling the virtues of some unknown band. I particularly love it when the hype begins to raise eBay prices and, before long, a mediocre retrospective record is produced. Then eBay process fall and everything goes back to normal. This is one case, however, where the community has been served properly. *Out of Vogue—The Early Material* is an essential document of that magical time in history where punk rock picked up speed. The song "Out of Vogue" is a classic smoker that has gotten around a bit. Loud, fast and out of control, it is the song that they are known for. But this record is not a one hit wonder.

Vogue contains the band's first two 7's plus some demos that are actually worth listening to. From session to session, their style wobbles between early Bad Brains recordings and Adolescents-sounding beach punk. The negligible variation in style and raw recording quality gives the record as a complete listen the feel of putting on *Discord's Year One*. The Middle Class originate from the late '70s when punks were unsure if the music could handle the speed. This document of their output is angry and sloppy and there is not a weak spot on the record. Am I an old codger extolling the virtues of a virtually unknown hardcore band? Maybe. But don't let that stop you. This is essential listening. An absolute keeper. —Billups Allen (Frontier)

MOB, THE: Let the Tribe Increase: CD

One of the best anarcho punk bands ever. While the majority went (and the new generation as well) for the hard-driving sound and a string of slogans, the Mob took a different route and offered something more human and believable. Their sound was mid tempo and dark, with the words clear and concise. The tone was full of despair and introspection towards war, human suffering, alienation, and the like. Musically, the songs range from straightforward, such as the classic "Witch Hunt" to abstract, as in the song "Roger." This disc collects their *Let the Tribes Increase* LP, and the *Mirror Breaks* single, as well as a demo version of "Stay." There's also

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a history of the band, and what was happening in England around and during their time, complimented by a nice layout with full color photos, flyers, and more. Well worth your time. I do know Broken Rekids released a complete discography in the mid '90s. No idea if that's still available. Also, if you like this band, then check out Blyth Power, and Zounds, which feature ex-Mob member, Joseph Porter. Then, seek out Thatcher On Acid, who stylistically were along the same lines. -M.Avg (Overground)

MORAL CRUX: Self-titled: LP/CD

I saw these dudes in Green Bay at Kutzka's Hall in '88 or '89 when they were touring in support of their LP *The Side Effects of Thinking*. (I believe that I have my facts straight; if not, may the Rev. Nørøb correct me sternly.) They were a fucking stellar live band, so I bought the original pressing of the record that it is now my solemn duty to review, but, for some reason, the record was always a disappointment compared to what I remembered live. That view lasted for about ten years, at which point I gave the wax another concerted listen and my God! how impressed I was. I do believe what I was tasting was a four-year residual from Boris The Sprinkler's split 7" with 'em. (The Rev. Nørøb was sternly rebuking my idiocy even then.) What a fool I had been for ten years of failing to appreciate primordial value in the crispy riffs of Moral Crux! Hoo boy, was I a dumbass. I just hadn't turned it up loud enough. I've been

paying for my sins, though, spending the last ten years in a makeshift punk rock Purgatorio in which the D's on my forehead (for "dumbass") are erased by singer-man James T. Farris only after great tribulation and penance on my part. If you've heard Moral Crux before, there's not new much that this re-release offers; the CD has some bonus stuff that sort of seems live, but sort of not at the same time. So far as I can tell, the LP is a simple re-issue of the original on a new label, and they've even included the original insert. And if you've not been graced by the clean and tight no-frills punk rock of Moral Crux, here's your chance at redemption. But make it loud so as not to be the lame bastard that I was for most of the '90s. —The Lord Kveldulf (Jailhouse)

MYSTERY GIRLS: *Incontinopia*: CD

Mystery Girls are one of those rare bands that manage to take equal influence from the Velvet Underground, Stooges, and the *Nuggets* comp series and make it all sound fresh. The tunes are, for the most part, slam-banged and overdriven, but still delivered with enough skill and attention to each song's potential dynamics to keep things devolving into a big assaultive, faceless mess. The more you listen, the better it gets. —Jimmy Alvarado (In the Red)

NECKTIES MAKE ME NERVOUS: (*I'm the Captain and I'm Telling You This Ship Is Fucked: 7"* EP)

This is a weird lament. *Razorcake* has a large, widespread family of over one

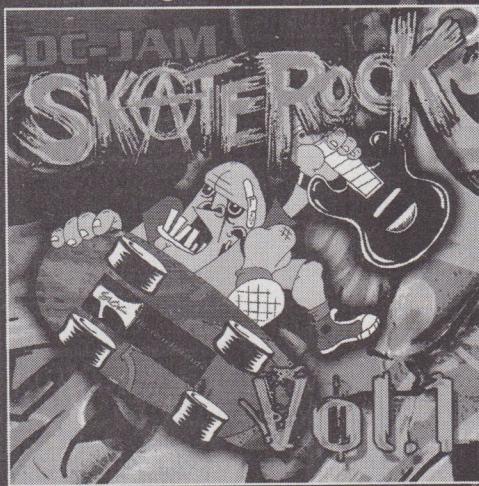
hundred active contributors. I'm not saying this as a boast. And the reason that we work with many of our repeat contributors is that we find them talented and agreeable. DIY punk is, at most, three degrees of separation. Keith Rosson of Neckties Make Me Nervous is a longtime graphic designer for us. We met years back at a reading at Reading Frenzy in Portland, Oregon and have remained in contact ever since. So, it becomes harder and harder not to critically access projects that our contributors are involved with because, in almost every instance, they are active parts of the underground. With fewer and fewer outlets even reviewing DIY punk nowadays, it'd be kinda shitty/dumb to ignore the very people we intentionally associate the closest with. End preamble. Start review. This is my favorite Neckties Make Me Nervous release to date. They've got a smart duct tape and nagging cough sensibility to the songs; the playing's tight and leaves distinct whip-like marks. My only issue, echoing a sentiment of Otis Redding, is that there's "too many fuckin' words." I'm all for words. The Minutemen and Fucked Up use a lot of them. But, even especially with The Minutemen who didn't use verse/chorus/verse, they had this sense of beginning/middle/end, and imbedded inside was a hook, a blasting refrain. I can conjure up the words, and sing along to "Bob Dylan wrote propaganda songs," after not hearing that song for months. Although

Neckties have smart, sympathetic, and relevant lyrics, I'm having a hard time remembering distinct, repeatable refrain from them. Maybe I just want a little bit more Tim Armstrong in the monitor and a little less Noam Chomsky on the teleprompter, but I still think this is a very good record. —Todd (Code Of Ethics)

NO CHOICE: *Anaesthetize This!*: CD

This is the latest release from a band that was part of the Riot City stable of bands back in the early '80s, and a doozy it is. While the name of their former label might bring to mind the political thrash of bands like Vice Squad and noisemongers Disorder, what we have here is an entirely different beast. Though they do kick into overdrive when the mood arises, the music occasionally falls more in line with post-Hüsker bands like Leatherface, with fine use being made of dual guitars, horns, and the occasional quiet, even acoustic bit thrown in. The lyrics are intelligent, thought provoking, dense, and address direct resistance to the current social order with a sincerity that is too often non-existent in this era of punk-as-career-move. Most importantly, the songs are so passionately delivered and, frankly, so good, it's hard to believe they're staring into the face of their third decade as a band. Destined to be looked at as one of modern-era punk's bright spot, virtually devoid of any pandering to what's been, and focusing attention instead on what's

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now in the hopes of affecting what may be to come. I respectfully tip my hat to 'em. -Jimmy Alvarado (No Idea)

NO SLOGAN: Aversion Therapy: LP

Please allow me a moment a full-on fan-greck moment here, 'cause truth be told, I saved listening to this until dead last. I didn't do this because I was afraid it was gonna suck, but because I knew it was gonna be something truly special, and I was sure I was gonna need something to end things on an up note after some of the heinous stuff that was buried in the selections I strapped myself with this review cycle. This is one of my favorite bands currently making the rounds, but I was not remotely prepared for how good it was actually is. Dig catchy, no-frills hardcore from a band with just enough melodic sense to cram crazy hooks into the tunes they're flailing away on? You got 'em. Prefer a more Naked Raygun-esque mid-tempo attack with said hooks infused with just a little off-kilter influences to give 'em a little tweak? Check. Are you just looking for a 12" slab of hit-encrusted vinyl that recalls the best of '80s punk rock without being saddled with all the annoying nostalgia? There are eleven tracks of prime punk fodder here for the taking that will shut the yap of the noisiest "I miss when punk was punk" whiner on your block, boyo. I've been listening to these guys consistently up the ante from one EP to the next and figured they'd have a helluva time surpassing their *Killed by Gentrification* EP, but this, their first full-length, is hands down their best effort yet,

one that deserves to be among the most treasured items in your record collection and played incessantly. Dunno how many copies are out there, but I suggest you buy in bulk as soon as you can 'cause this is destined to be considered a classic in no time. Fuck yeah, I'm gushing, and I dare you to listen to this and manage not to do the same. -Jimmy Alvarado (residuerecords@gmail.com)

NOISE ATTACK/INOCULATORS: Split 7"

Here's a hot little slab of punk rock goodness. Kicking off the single is Noise Attack: straight-up mid-tempo punk rock with shout back backups, raspy vocals, and socially aware lyrics. Angry and urgent is where it's at! Inoculators are a little bit faster and gruffer, but every bit as pissed off. These songs are so catchy but not poppy. In that respect, I'm reminded of Rebel Spell a bit. I really, really like both bands on here and will be searching out more. Now a note on the single itself. It's fuckin' beautiful! The cover art is stellar, all in red, black, and white. It matches nicely with the red and black spattered wax inside. I really appreciate it when a band puts together a nice package to go along with their ripping tunes. -Ty Stranglehold (myspace.com/noiseattack myspace.com/inoculators)

NOISE ATTACK/INOCULATORS: Split 7"

If you can still stomach the *Gi~~e~~ e~~t~~ t~~e~~oot* comps, then there's room in your life for this 7". For everyone else, let's just pretend like this never happened. Bad punk clichés all over the place here, from the sexy nurse on

the cover and the bombs on the back, to the walking bass lines and pick slides. A waste of a lovely piece of red and black splattered vinyl. -Jeff Proctor (Self-released)

NOJONS, THE: Unnatural Selections: Cassette

Apparently, this tape is limited to something like ten copies, which is a shame, because this tape rules. However, I'm pretty sure it's a collection of old records, so, either way, you should track it down. Poppy punk that I don't know if I'd label straight-up pop punk (though there's a few songs like "My Philly Girl"), that reminds me of the Dead Milkmen and Scared Of Chaka at times. They also manage to accomplish the feat of having a ton of songs that don't sound exactly alike, yet are still similar enough that it doesn't make me bored after a while. I recommend the heck out of this band. -Joe Evans III (Self-Released)

NOW DENIAL: Facemelter: CD

Stoner rock with a singer that sounds like he's in dire need of a good hug. -Jimmy Alvarado (Tor Johnson)

O PIONEERS!!!: Neon Creeps: CD

Fugazi tries to channel their inner Replacements and brand the results with rejected Dillinger Four titles. -Jimmy Alvarado (Asian Man)

ON THE BRINK: Take Cover: CD

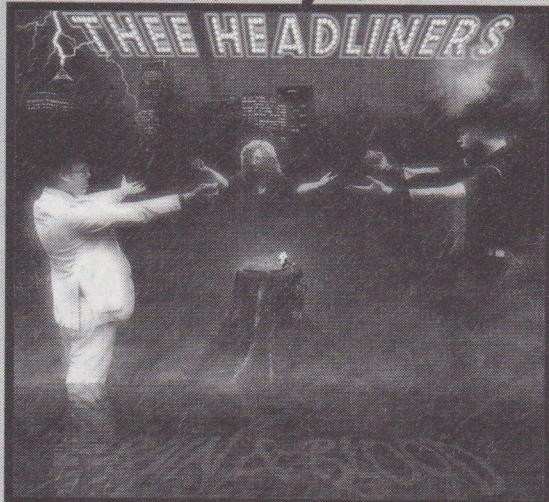
Is Longshot Records the new TKO? Who knows, but I do know that they

consistently release great records by bands rocking the whole Beltones/Bodies vibe. You can add On The Brink to the list of good ones. The songs here are rockin' and very catchy. I find my head uncontrollably bobbing up and down and my hand unconsciously reaching for another beer. They have a lot in common with fellow Edmontonians Wednesday Night Heroes but with perhaps a little more Ripcordz in their sound. Edmonton has had a long and storied punk rock history and On The Brink are adding another page. -Ty Stranglehold (Longshot)

PARASITES, THE: Solitary: CD

Ack! I want to like this more than I do! I have waited ~~for~~ for this album! The first song ("All the Time in the World") is classic Parasites pop punk greatness! But then the rest of the album just starts to seem like one long pop song. Ack! Perhaps this album needs two tablespoons more punk rock and a slightly faster tempo! Certainly the cheezy classic Parasites lyrics are there ("When I think of things we'll never have/It breaks my heart, it hurts so bad.") But there's also the less-than-classic ("Nobody's calling me/I used up my battery/But as soon as it holds a charge/Then my life will start again"). I will give this time for a more thorough evaluation. But right now, if this were a cereal, it'd be Kix. Not bad, but if you're expecting Lucky Charms, then you've got a problem. -Maddy (Kid Tested, www.kidtestedrecords.com)

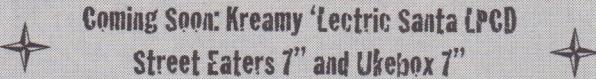
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PEGGY SUES / FUTURE LOVERS: Split 7"

The Peggy Sues are lesbians playing lascivious, gyrating rock that sounds like a sloppy version of the band from "Prey for Rock 'n' Roll." The Future Lovers play herky-jerky whoah-oh pop-punk songs about staring at girls. You know how depressing it is when you're sober at a party where a bunch of awkward people have got drunk and started hitting on each other? Like, it's almost funny, but it's just too much of a bummer? This record puts that feeling on wax. —CT Terry (Wee Rock)

PETER STUBB: Selected Cuts Vol. 1: LP

Imagine making a casserole from equal parts G.G. Allin, a sidewalk performer with an acoustic guitar, and the underbelly of backwoods Georgia. Mix well and serve it up half-baked and you'll essentially have this record. Primarily a discography of previous cassette releases (or so it seems), parts of this record are really entertaining and parts are really sort of crappy. But I liked it enough that I'd listen to it again—the closest, I believe, that I can come to an accurate comparison would be that this is kind of like Beck meets Antiseen. —The Lord Kveldulf (Family Night)

PHANTOM LIMBS: Accept the Juice / Whole Loto Love: CD + DVD

My unabashed admiration for this band's synth-pumped, psychotic circus punk has been well documented; and my belief that punk rock is worse off with their passing is heartfelt. What

these kids were doing was reveling in the same alluring creativity, unpredictability, and, yes, sense of danger that allowed those first few waves of punk to fuck up so many lives. They were a band to get genuinely excited about, and I'm gonna spend the rest of my life kicking myself in the ass for not seein' 'em when I had the chance. I guess they figured there were quite a few fans as dumb as I, so in addition to a disc's worth of singles tracks, remixes, and live cuts—all of which are friggin' choice, I might add—they've seen fit to include a DVD filled with live footage of the band wreaking bloody, occasionally disrobed, havoc on unsuspecting audiences. This one's a definite must-have for any collection. —Jimmy Alvarado (Alternative Tentacles)

PINK RAZORS: Leave Alive: 12"EP

Honest, emotional pop punk from this former Richmond, VA, four-piece, and now dispersed between Richmond, Bloomington, IN, and Tucson, AZ. Male and female vocals trade off between tracks. Songs sung by newest member, Erin Tobey have a familiar sound to them, familiarity without mimicry, however. The easiest point of reference is likely Discount, but there is much more going on here than just tracing over points plodded out previously by Alison and co. A rollicking instrumental, "Clouded," is a nice touch and is followed by the very Vena Cava-esque "No Secrets." Erin shares vocals and guitar duty with

Jeff Grant. Jeff's songs are fine, though a little more straightforward pop punk (in the DIY school of pop punk that is—think Shorebirds) and a little less dynamic, less remarkable, showing Erin to be a truly inspired addition to the band. I look forward to new releases and more incorporation of Erin's voice in the mix. Nine tracks in total here, released on Houseplant Records, a label created by Jeff and Erin. Definitely worthy of multiple listens. Recommended for fans of Superchunk, Discount, and Vena Cava. —Jeff Proctor (Houseplant)

PIST, THE: Ideas Are Bulletproof: LP

Glad to see this back in print. The Pist are not to be denied! Seems like a lot of people had a hard time finding this album, at least on the West Coast, when it originally came out. The street punk influence is more prominent on here (and saluted in the song, "Street Punk"), and the songs have slowed down slightly. I always thought the mix on here sounded a little flat. They should have turned the guitars up a bit more, and maybe a little more low end to give the music more punch. But what can you do? Songs like "Energy" with its quick pace and stop-go breaks is a ripper, and you get the classic "Still Pist" on here as well. I would suggest starting with the singles collections, *Input Equals Output*, then get this. —M.Avg (Havoc)

PROPAGANDHI: Supporting Caste: CD

I honestly thought I was done with Propagandhi after 2005's *Potemkin City Limits*. They just seemed to be going

through the motions on that one. Less anger and more pleading didn't look good on them, and I never listened to the record again. I almost didn't listen to this one either, but I would have been kicking myself in the nuts for that one (is that even possible?). *Supporting Caste* is the best thing the band has put out since *Less Talk More Rock*. First off, it's heavy, and I mean fuckin' heavy! Becoming a four piece really adds a new dimension to the sound. It bugs your eyes right out of your head. The lyrical content is, as always, anti-bigotry, homophobia, corporation, and carnivore (but pro cannibal!). They're even pissed off again! Anarchy never sounded so good! —Ty Stranglehold (G7 Welcoming Committee)

PSYCHED TO DIE: Sterile Walls: 7"EP

Tootsie Pop hardcore with a chewy pop sensibility underneath the thick shell. Think along the lineage of Minor Threat to Kid Dynamite to Western Addiction. Featuring Mike Erg on drums, it, thankfully, doesn't sound like a band dalliance into hardcore ("Next week, funk!"), but a genuine article. Desperate, tightly wound, anxious-sounding stuff that veers away from simple monkey beats or a blur to cover up any shortcomings. Thumbs up. —Todd (Grave Mistake / Firestarter)

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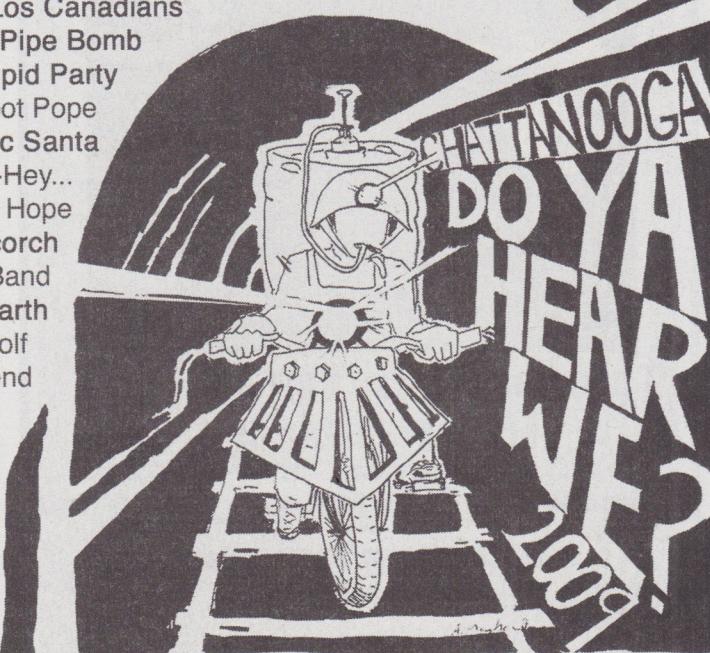
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brilliant, crass, punk as hell gems like "Bloody Gumballs" and "Dead as a Sad Snail." The guitarist supposedly plays a guitar converted from an old skateboard, which goes beyond funny and into the realm of honesty awesome. Most thirteen-year-olds in bands write more mature lyrics than these guys, but there's nothing more enduring than aging rockers singing about giving mothers a break on Mother's Day by not raping or punching them in the face. I'm in love with this timeless folly. —Art Ettinger (Zodiac Killer)

RADIO FACES, THE:

Party at the Bushwick Hotel: LP

Occasionally clever and catchy, but not essential as the bands from which they came, listening to The Radio Faces is an inconsistent affair. It alternates between "this is really great" from "get on with it," from second to second. It's sorta like wrestling a bear with a live fish in your back pocket. If all you had to do was wrestle the bear without distraction, you could single focus on that bear. (And probably get your ass handed to you, even if it was a cub, but you could get some licks in before the bear mauled you.) Yet with that fish in your back pocket, distracting you with a paroxysm of wiggles against a part of your body that isn't used to such wigglin', how in the fuck can you grapple with that bear undistracted? You'd be lucky to get in any karate moves before dying. With The Radio Faces, replace

the bear with classic rock'n'roll fronted by singer songwriter men like Bruce Springsteen, Chuck Berry, and Tom Petty. Replace the fish with an ADD approach to music, where song-to-song (even within songs) seems to be flapping around too much for a cohesive album. But you don't have to believe me or follow far-fetched analogies. If you're fans of Nate (Modern Machines), Jamie (Bent Outta Shape), Mikey (Ergs!), and Skip (Ringers, I believe), and feel like giving The Radio Faces, give it a go. I won't stop you. —Todd (Art Of The Underground)

RED PHONE DISPATCH:

Safety in Numbers: CD

I picked this up after I booked a show for these guys in New York City. In promoting the show, I described them as "like if Screeching Weasel was fronted by a used car salesman, and fun," and I don't think I can come up with anything better than that. After a self-released EP, this is a full album's worth of pop punk, with light-hearted songs that have vocals that come at you a mile a minute. If you're into pop punk, you should check these guys out. —Joe Evans III (Rally)

REVENGE: *Promo CD II: CD-R*

Boy, I'm so lucky! I get to review their second promo! If the first one wasn't bad enough that I had to hear their take on commercial hard rock like the Disturbed, I get to hear it again. More power to these dudes from Finland. If you send

another one, please put on the envelope "Please do not give to Donoftheaded." —Donoftheaded (Revengine)

REVOLUTIONARY YOUTH:

Bleed/Decay: LP

Epicly DIY and exquisitely packaged, Revolutionary Youth's *Bleed/Decay*, released on Atlanta's No Breaks Records, comes hand-numbered (short run of two hundred pressed) and hand-screened on the inside of an old, deconstructed record sleeve (in my case, an old Pretenders record). Pressed on grey-marble colored vinyl, it includes an insert on how to fix your bike yourself and tips on dumpster diving, as well as a lyric sheet that is sewn together. Taken all together, it is really remarkable how much heart was put into creating this thing. Musically, it is genuinely emotional, technical, beastly, gut-wrenching hardcore. Big, bombastic, epic thrashing prevails. Dual vocalists, one screeches and squeals, the other (and this is where it loses me) barks and growls, borrowing from the Cookie Monster school of vocals. Speaking for myself, it's hard to take the Cookie Monster thing seriously. But, for those of you into that style of hardcore, you've struck gold with this record. —Jeff Proctor (No Breaks)

RISE UP HOWLIN' WEREWOLF:

Escape for Kool-Aid Island: LP

Different wiring. That's what brings so many of us together. And those wiring harnesses aren't simple. They aren't even the same from person to

person. Rise Up Howlin' Werewolf play an honest form of sparse, roiling rock'n'roll that, if the world made any sort of sense to me, would be embraced far and wide. I hear deep, muddled water strains of the never-played-on-the-radio tracks of Southern rock bands from the '60s and '70s like The Allman Brothers, Lynyrd Skynyrd, and Black Oak Arkansas performed without irony or puckered-lipped pretense; played with fire in the more modern Quadrajets, Wednesdays, Bob Log III, Pine Hill Haints, High Tension Wires tradition. More great stuff from Arkam. —Todd (Arkam)

RIVERBOAT GAMBLERS:

Underneath the Owl: CD

Sometimes being a reviewer can be a pain in the ass. This is one of those times. I absolutely love the Riverboat Gamblers. Their last record *To the Confusion of Our Enemies* is a masterpiece, and never in my life has a record made it into my all-time top ten list that fast. I think that is a big part of why I'm having so much trouble with this record. Sometimes you put a record on a high pedestal and there is no way that the band can live up to it with their next release. The thing is; this record is full of great songs. They are Riverboat Gamblers songs through and through. The problem I'm having is the production. It's too clean and polished and doesn't suit them. The thing I love about the Gamblers is the ferocity of them. The songs on the last couple of records sound like a wounded animal backed into a corner that's going to fight

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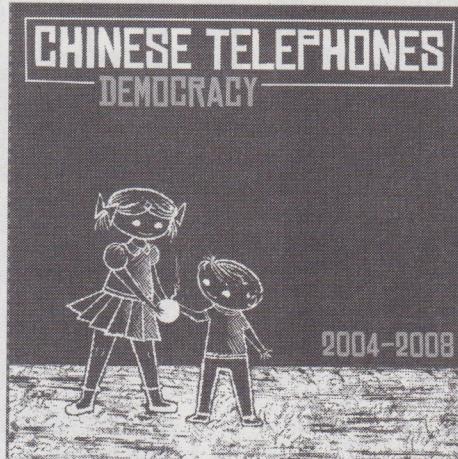
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its way out or die trying. I'm just not feeling the intensity on this one. The high points here are the lyrics. Mike's writing is still as amazing as ever. So full of life, yet sad and alienated. In the end, I liked the B sides that came with my download from their site more than the single and the re-recording of "Keep Me From Drinking." I won't stop listening to this record; in fact I'll pick up the LP as soon as I can. I was just hoping for something that I think may be unattainable. -Ty Stranglehold (Volcom)

RVIVR: Life Moves: 7"EP

I'm not religious, but I believe there are forces greater than ourselves that we cannot control nor fully understand. Color me a dark shade of purpley bummed when the Shorebirds broke up. When I heard that member(s) of the Shorebirds went on to RVIVR, I sorta shrugged, still rooting for a past favorite instead of caring about their musical present. Well, turn that slouchy shrug into a touchdown stance. RVIVR flat-out rule, too, although it's a different gig. Apparently, California's East Bay has shifted up to Olympia, Washington. And what you get is ragged, scrappy, catchy, co-ed DIY punk that has more than a passing blush in the vocal department to Annie of This Is My Fist and Ambition Mission. Songs about fought-hard-for optimism, the sand-choking passage of time, and the ultimate question: What's next? RVIVR brings it. -Todd (Rumbletowne)

SANITY ASSASSINS:

Speed of Death: LP

I don't have any recollection of what this band sounds like anymore. I know my old band was on a French comp with them. I initially thought this band was from the U.K. because some of their releases were released in Europe. I came to find out they are from Connecticut. They have had a number of releases put out through the last couple of decades—not just in Europe and the U.S.—but all over, including Japan, Mexico, and Brazil. Boy, these guys got their music listened to around the world. This LP compiles their 2000 demo and live recordings from that year. From reading the back cover, the band had various sounds through the years. This LP focuses on their more straight-up early '80s punk sound: snotty with three chord, middle finger in the air attitude. Thoughts of Litmus Green meets Stukas Over Bedrock come to mind. -Donothedead (Tornado Ride)

SASS DRAGONS / BROKEDOWNS:

Split 7"

Try this out on a new person or a jaded fuck with easy-to-push buttons. "Dude, have you heard that Black Flag/Dwarves split 7"? Then put this on without letting them see the label or cover. If any eyebrows of incredulity are raised, go, "From '84. They were playing that *Slip It In* bullshit and decided to stop wanking around for a couple of songs. The Dwarves were just starting out. Super rare." If that still doesn't work, go, "Oh, it was members of Youth Of

Today when they lost their edge. The non-Buddhist dudes who didn't go into Shelter." But what it really is, is just two great Chicago bands losing their shit in the best possible way, and one of them throws in a Breeders cover that's mangled like a slow possum on an unrelenting freeway with its dead, popping eye following your every movement. -Todd (Let's Pretend, myspace.com/letspretendrecs/Cassette Deck, cassettedeckmedia.com)

SEX ROBOTS / BUNNYGRUNTS:

Tribute to St. Louis: 7"

Two songs by a couple of old St. Louis bands are covered by newer St. Louis bands. Having never heard the originals, I can say the Sex Robots' version of "Crazy (On You)" is a nice bit of catchy poppy punk, and Bunnygrunts' take on "Frankie Is a Killer" is a nice bit of rock-informed punk. Good split single on the whole, and it kinda made me wish I knew the originals. -Jimmy Alvarado (Bert Dax Cavalcade Of Stars)

SHAKING HANDS, THE: Self-titled: CD

Two of the dudes from The Young Livers put together The Shaking Hands, a melodic streetpunk band that's more hit than miss. At their best, The Shaking Hands strike a chord in the vein of Reducers SF, but some of the songs are awfully bland. Overall, I'm falling for it and am considering picking up the vinyl version. This simplistic, 1990s street sound is in jeopardy, after snoots turned their

backs on it. Yet most people would need to be strapped to a chair to not want to get up and hop around while The Shaking Hands play. Count me in with the unashamed. I'd shake their fucking hands any day. -Art Ettinger (ADD/Kiss Of Death)

SHANG-A-LANG / TURKISH TECHNO: Split 7"

Turkish Techno: In this post Hot Water Music world, it's difficult to tread water in that band's wake. But, Turkish Techno pulls it off by casting their net into good, old-fashioned hardcore aggression's waters. While it sounds like several contemporary bands are deep frying frozen fishsticked parts of HWM's catalog in an attempt to recreate previous magic while ultimately sounding greasy and clogged, Turkish Techno adds the acidic lime of bands like early Black Flag to "cook" the raw fish. A ceviche, if you will. A delicious one. Shang-a-Lang: Still choke me up more than just a little when I listen to them or see them live. They play with an earnestness usually reserved to musicians ten or fifteen years younger, the music is the perfect sloppy tightness, and, having personally put all of their songs onto a more versatile digital format, I can support the thesis that even their anti-work songs made a day of pick axing all the more tolerable, bordering on pleasurable. Duct tapedly awesome. -Todd (Muy Autentico, myspace.com/totallyofficial)



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SHRED SAVAGE: Self-titled: 7"

Do you remember when I said these guys sounded like the Adolescents? (No, you don't.) When I got this, I noticed on the back it said Frank Agnew was on vocals and I got really confused, thinking it to be some joke. I did some research and Frank Jr. is the vocalist in this here band. Anyway, the Adolescents vibe isn't as strong on this release and it's for the better. They are beginning to sound like their own band and it sounds great: punk rock with just a twist of metal, but not overwhelmingly so. I can't wait to see a full-length from these guys. -Bryan Static (Small Pool)

SIDE PROJECT, THE: New Brain: 7"

This record has one great song! In fact, the song was so good (classic pop punk!), that it took me until about halfway through the next song to realize that the second song wasn't that great! Deception! If this were a cereal, it'd be Apple Jacks! Close your eyes, and it almost tastes like Froot Loops! -Maddy (Traffic Street)

SKIDS, THE: The Absolute Game: CD

The Captain's website says this was their best selling album to date, and you can hear why. The Skids managed a feat here that so few of their contemporaries ever matched, namely cleaning up their sound and making it more marketable without losing a bit of their punk edge. The songs here are catchy as hell, bounce from one style to another to keep things from falling into one-

dimensional stagnation, are matched with top-notch lyrics, and feature some seriously impressive guitar work by a guy who went on to greater fame in Big Country. Alex Ogg's liner notes detail the band's history and the back stories pertaining to this recording. As can be expected, a solid reissue. -Jimmy Alvarado (Captain Oi)

SNEAKY PINKS, THE: Loner with a Boner b/w We're the Punkles: 7"

One of the members of The Sneaky Pinks is the mysterious Nobunny and the format for the music is similar. Crappy drum machines programmed over lo-fi recordings. It is really great music, and especially worthwhile if you love the Nobunny record. The people behind these bands have interested me in drum machines effectively for the first time since the second EPMD album. The Sneaky Pinks first single contained a pseudo-classic called "I Can't Wait." "Loner With a Boner" should enjoy the same status. This 7" appears to be a posthumous release: the only information included on the sleeve indicates that these two songs were once released as a cassette single. That makes it all the better for me. -Billups Allen (Bachelor)

SOLID PONY: Collar to Cuff: CD

Mellow, woozy, jangly pop stuff. Singer's a shoe-in to replace one of the duds in Peter, Paul, and Mary if ever he decided to pursue such a gig. -Jimmy Alvarado (Bakery Outlet)

SPORES, THE:**News, Weather and Spores: CD**

Dunno a damn thing about these guys other than they hail(ed) from Vancouver and, based on the dates given for the material here, were active 1984-88. The music here showcases a band that sought to stretch punk's parameters a bit by throwing in bits of country twang, standard rock, and other elements into the tuneage, and they weren't afraid to use humor to address more conventional punk topics like animal exploitation, media manipulation, and the like. Also included are a couple of low budget videos the band shot that are very much of their time. -Jimmy Alvarado (Sudden Death)

STRANGEBOYS: Woe Is You And Me b/w Baby Please Don't Go: 7"

Kickin' garage rock with a hint of blues and very strangely recorded vocals. Places to listen to this include: hole in the wall bar, 1940s deep south America, or the crossroads while waiting to sell your soul to Beelzebub. -Bryan Static (In The Red)

STREET EATERS / WHITE NIGHT: Split 7"

White Night: Anaheim. Post Pterodactyls dudes. It's like those close-up diagrams of, say, a hair follicle versus looking down at your own arm and looking at all the hair on it at once. Up close, White Night are chock full of tiny pop influences, but growing out of dirty, charming, lo-fi DIY punk rock. Like if FYP had influenced the Beach Boys (instead of visa versa). But on

a quick glance from pretty far away, you could just easily say, "Neat band." Both would be right. Street Eaters: John Geek (Fleshies, Triclops!) and Megan March (Neverending Party) join up as a bass and drums duo. Their songs have a Wire-y space, sparseness, and tremble that has some overlap to Northern California contemporaries Surrender. Broken and asphalt songs with broad-leaved weeds growing through them, even during a Devo cover. Nice. -Todd (Repulsion)

STREET EATERS / WHITE NIGHT: Split 7"

What a match up! These bands sound nothing like each other. Street Eaters play arty, minimal punk with a bass that's soaked in distortion, drums, and John and Megan's amazing voices. White Night's songs seem a little snottier than what was on their Burger Records' tape, but these songs still fly the pop punk flag from atop a pile of dethroned royalty's mangled dreams. I put this split up there with last year's Canadian Rifle/American Cheeseburger split: awesome bands working on the same DIY wavelength can never go wrong together. It doesn't matter how different they sound. -Daryl (Repulsion)

STUPID PARTY: Self-titled: mini-LP

It's like Hickey didn't have the stoner rock inclination and then decided to cover the Melvins at their grungiest. And then realized that they didn't really want to. And then did it anyway. With hella fuzz. And done by some

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dudes from Hunchback. Pretty good stuff. —Vincent (Freedom School)

SUBHUMANS, THE: *Death Was Too Kind*: LP

I think it was sometime in 1986 when a guy named Kevin (who was dating my aunt) decided to steer my music taste for the better. I was already starting to get into punk rock and had the Sex Pistols and Dead Kennedys. "That's good," he said, "but here's something better." The record he lent me had a stark white cover with four dark figures wearing trench coats and goggles. All it said on it was The Subhumans. When I put it on the turntable, I was blasted with four songs that blew all my perceptions of punk rock out of the water. I played it over and over again. My new battle cry was "We don't care what you say... fuck you!" It was a record that truly changed my life. Now a mere thirty years since it was first released, the good folks at Alternative Tentacles have brought forth a reissue that everyone should own. Not only that, but they have included the tracks from both the *Death to the Sickoids* and *Firing Squad* singles, as well as a couple of unreleased gems! I'm in Canuck punk heaven! I don't have to play the beat-to-shit version that I swiped from Kevin all those years ago! Here is proof positive that Bob Rock actually produced something worthwhile once! Get this now! —Ty Stranglehold (Alternative Tentacles)

SUBHUMANS, THE: *Death Was Too Kind*: LP

Possibly one of the most important releases in the landscape of obscure punk. Just to make it clear, the Subhumans on this record were a Vancouver band from the early '80s who share a name with the British unit most people are familiar with. Many a brave punker has searched record lists and pounded the internet just for an opportunity to bid on bootlegs of any of the three classic singles contained on this record and been let down. Even the later cheapo CD collection *Pissed Off... With Good Reason* and the CD release of the classic album *Incorrect Thoughts* were impossible to find at any price. *Death Was Too Kind* contains all of the first three singles released by these Canadian pioneers along with two unreleased tracks from the collection. For years, whiffs of this collection were spread out among various comps: the scope of The Subhumans importance still shrouded in obscurity. Now, for all the glory of punkdom, these tracks have finally been reunited. The Subhumans appeared on no less than *Let Them Eat Jellybeans* and the *Vancouver Compilation* and have been made infamous with DOA's cover of their now classic anthem "Fuck You." Their cred is infallible and the songs are timeless punk classics. It is almost inconceivable that history forgot this band. This is more than a collection of singles; it is testament to the enduring timelessness of good punk rock. It just doesn't get more essential than this.

—Billups Allen (Alternative Tentacles)

SUN GOD: (*S*)Pain: 7" EP

Shimmery, poppy punk neck deep in Hüsker-land, right down to the drony guitar leads, crossed with some nods to early Samiam. What they put down here might not be as tight as some of their influences, but they sure as hell make up for it in delivery. —Jimmy Alvarado (Pizza Pants)

SUPER SEXY BOY 1986:

Royal Peacocks: CD

Bluesy Italian punk delivered by a band that puts enough oomph into the delivery to raise it a bit above the sea of other bluesy punk bands offerin' up similar goods. The first of the bonus tracks, "Laguna Seca," is a doozy. —Jimmy Alvarado (Zodiac Killer)

TEENERS, THE: *Gold*: 7"

Finally, a record that can be used to rip paint off walls. —Speedway Randy (Super Secret)

THUNDERS:

"Sympathetic Oscillations": CDEP

Insouciant rock music that reminds me of some of the alternative bands from the '80s who drew from smacked-out psychedelic rock. I think they should open for Spiritualized. They make me want to dedicate a sunny afternoon to getting blurry on can beer and cheap pot. My one gripe is that the songs are catchy, but don't pick up where they need to. Still, this got played through twice in a row. —CT Terry (A Squared Industries, www.asquaredonline.com)

TO WHAT END? / WITCH HUNT: *Split* 7"

This hard-hitting 7" combines the musings of crust groups To What End? from Sweden and Witch Hunt from Philadelphia. These bands both unleash their mayhem with a tag-team mantra that highlights their female/male dynamic lineups with both sexes offering biting vocal exchanges. In Witch Hunt's "Punk by Numbers," guitarist Nicole takes the verses while guitarist Rob belts out the choruses and Janine supplies backup. Gotta love bands that play as bands. Witch Hunt's cover of Rudimentary Peni's "Cosmetic Plague" makes for a pleasant ending track to their side of the split. To What End? brews up metallic riffs in a stew of social/political lyrics. Words to their song "Common Reject" read like direct affront against our war with Iraq: "A bullet with a chaser, so easily embraced. When served without fine points." This fine example of Swedish hardcore makes this split worth getting. —N.L. Dewart (Witch Hunt, Final Attempt, Fight for Your Mind)

TRENCHFOOT: Demo: Cassette

Loud, thrashy three piece from Illinois. If these dudes had a time machine, they could have easily been added onto the *Rat Music* compilation with no complications. It's usually a good sign when the first song's lyrics get lodged in my earlobes: "Fuck the mess/ I'm not cleaning up this time." "Teenagers" is also pretty damn catchy. Don't be surprised to

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hear more from these young street urchins soon. -Sean Koepenick (Self-released)

TUBERS: *Shell Out*: CD

I hear little touches of the Minutemen's artier moments and maybe a breath of mid-'60s psychedelia here and there, but the bulk of this is pandering in mid-'80s DC emo dreckery. -Jimmy Alvarado (Bakery Outlet)

TVEES, THE: Self-titled: CD

The TVEES are trying to recapture the sound of early 1960s garage rock. Most of the garage punk bands of today are influenced by those older sounds, but still show hints of influence from the punk rock that followed. Not so with The TVEES, who convincingly sound like the soundtrack for an old exploitation film. While still firmly a gimmick band, this is a very rocking, very genuine release. It's making me want to don funny pants and pretend like it is 1967. -Art Ettinger (Trendsetter)

UNDERGROUND RAILROAD TO CANDYLAND: *Bird Roughs*: Cassette

At the exact moment I was reviewing this record, my kid was actually playing Candyland in the next room! I swear this is fucking true! Okay, I've calmed down. Spry, lo-fi release from this San Pedro outfit that shows a lot of promise. 'Livin' in a Straw' is a cool song with some sweet fills. 'Don't Expect Me to Sleep' could be a theme song for any band out on the road for

long stretches at a time. Maybe the band will allow me to upgrade to a CD at Insubordination Fest 2009. We shall see my friends, we shall see. -Sean Koepenick (People's Republic)

UNITED MUTATION:

Fugitive Family/Rainbow Person: CD

2009 reissue from the archives of this underground DC label. Loud, abrasive, and in your face. The first EP goes full tilt, with "Passout" a particular highlight. "Fat Louie" and "Zone" from the second EP will give you the creeps in a totally cool way. '80s hardcore updated for the digital age. You need this. No excuses. -Sean Koepenick (DSI)

UNWELCOME GUESTS: *The Painter*: 7"

Catchy, poppy punk more along the lines of bands like the Replacements. Lyrics seem thought out, the songs have some good hooks, the band is on-point throughout, and the printing of the cover is top-notch, making for a release that bears the markings of folks who put some effort into this. -Jimmy Alvarado (Feral Kid)

VAGINASORE JR.:

This Here Peninsula: LP

This is the best record I have heard so far in 2009. Most bands are not able to make two good records in a row. With their latest recording, Vaginasore Jr. (VSJR) did just that. VSJR is a continuation of a lot of good indie rock and punk from the south, like Panthro UK United 13, Against Me!, and Superchunk. The songs take the things you've been frustrated with lately and set them into killer melodies that the listener can scream at an unsuspecting passerby. Some bands use this frustration as a formula, others spin it into gold. It's always a good feeling to know that someone can still do it the way it's supposed to be done. Best of all, the songs have incredible, melodic verses that take you deeper into the band. The song that stands out to me

get in to things like power violence or grind in short bursts, but to make it in to the repeat play file there has to be hooks. Not that this record is a grind record. It's solidly Florida "beard" punk, even though I hate that term. I just know you'll know what I mean if I say it. Anyway... hooks. This record doesn't have them. It sort of plods along in that Tampa Tiltwheel-loving style but with a little less flare than I'm accustomed to from the guys in this band. I will say that they retain the title of "greatest 'band name parody' band name ever." Sorry, guys. Maybe it's this dreary SF bay area weather that's not allowing me to tap in to that Tampa Bay style this time out. -Stevo (ADD)

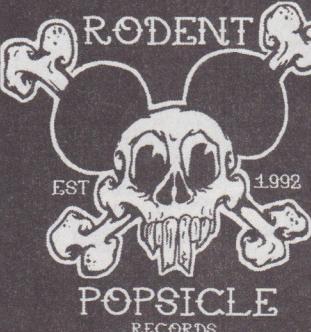
VAGINASORE JR.:

This Here Peninsula: LP

This is the best record I have heard so far in 2009. Most bands are not able to make two good records in a row. With their latest recording, Vaginasore Jr. (VSJR) did just that. VSJR is a continuation of a lot of good indie rock and punk from the south, like Panthro UK United 13, Against Me!, and Superchunk. The songs take the things you've been frustrated with lately and set them into killer melodies that the listener can scream at an unsuspecting passerby. Some bands use this frustration as a formula, others spin it into gold. It's always a good feeling to know that someone can still do it the way it's supposed to be done. Best of all, the songs have incredible, melodic verses that take you deeper into the band. The song that stands out to me

is track five, "The Pace and Stupidity of Survival." The confidence and attitude are right on. It's a three-minute song but it extends into your life for another three hours as it replays in your head and sing along. "All these self righteous motherfuckers are taking over the world / So heavenly minded, so full of their own self-worth / So judgmental in their bastard ideals / They're no good here on earth." This is the second time that Richie Lawler (singer) has gotten into my head. I spent the latter part of 2007 yelling a line from the last album (*Strikes and Gutters*) at people. And it takes me back to a time when the same thing happened with "Slack Motherfucker" by Superchunk in the '90s. Another standout song is "Nice Blinker Asshole." The lyrics from this song come from the bumper stickers seen on a truck rolling by then stretches them out and pokes holes in them. "So opinionated at 60 miles an hour; sometimes you ask yourself 'What the fuck would Jesus do?' / 'Heritage not Hate,' that's one hell of a stance / Dropped at 12 years old / home-schooled by the Klan." There are pop gems on this record too, like "Drunk Therapist," and "Livin' Life," a cover of a Daniel Johnston song. This is an unlikely cover song for a band that runs in the punk rock circles of Florida, but makes total sense when you hear it. One song, "The Disembodied Reflections of Lester Burnham" takes a speech from the movie *American Beauty* and sets it up in a song. The speech comes from the final minute of the movie where Kevin Spacey's character gets shot and his life flashes

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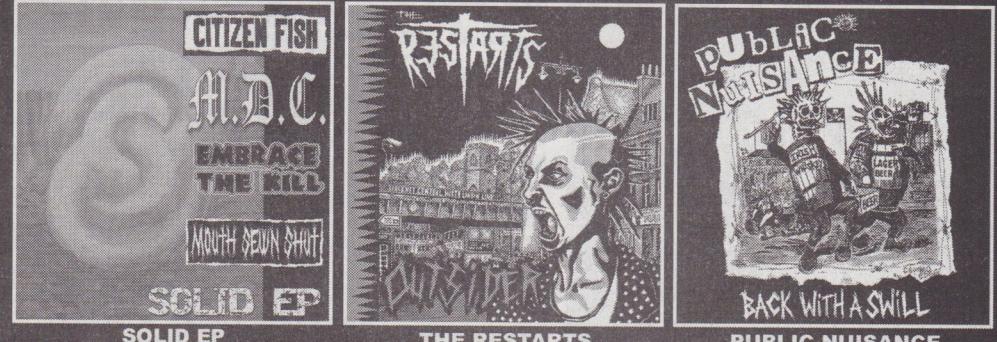
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before his eyes. The band captures it in a long-verse melody that does it justice. Inspiration is what good songs are made of and this song is inspired... period. These songs work on me the same way that the film *American Beauty* does. It takes a dull, familiar scene and turns it into brilliance. In the movie, they show a garage with a weight bench... or a plastic bag whipping in the wind (or Thora Birch's massive rack) and turn your attention on them to give you a new way to see them. The supporting cast of the band brings these songs into three dimensions. The drums propel the songs and never let them slack. The lead guitar scribbles at will in a way that only Dave Decker (Watson) can. And the deep bass runs freely (Russ Van Cleave, The Tim Version). It's like sacrifice, but I have to say it... I like VSJR better than DSJR. -Dave Rohm (ADD)

VARIOUS ARTISTS:

20th Anniversary Comp: LP

At the core of every scene is a tightly knit cluster of people whose dedication and love for music far surpasses any other motivation. Bill, Dr. Strange, is one of those folks. People not from the L.A. bombing area (the area that would be directly affected by a nuclear bomb blast), may think that there are hundreds and hundreds of dedicated punks in L.A. all working together for a united tomorrow (sorta sounds like a skinhead pamphlet), but it's not. L.A. and the outlying areas are more like three hundred towns that have grown into one another and communication

between all the different sorts of punks is scattered and imperfect. And don't get me started on all the scumbags, rip-off artists, and bluster-filled short-timers who are bent on telling people how to act, and then disappear who have come through L.A. in the past twenty years. But amidst this long-raging storm, Bill has fairly, honestly, and even-handedly run an ethical world-class punk record distro., opened a record store in Alta Loma, and in 1989, started a record company that, to date, has close to 120 releases. I'm always happy to hear from folks living a little East of L.A., how much of a lifeline and an outpost Dr. Strange was for them in finding punk that wasn't on a corporately sponsored tour or the punk de jour of the moment (ska, emo, mohawked butt hair with violins or whatever's next). What's really cool about this picture disk comp is that it reclaims a bit of the ground lost in the glut of label samplers over the past decade. Bill has always had a great ear and if you're just getting into punk or are interested in more than just one tiny subgenre endlessly repackaged and re-released, this is a great capsule of music, featuring bands spanning Bill's twenty years of direct involvement. High fives, Bill. Next tube of lube is on me, buddy. -Todd (Dr. Strange)

VARIOUS ARTISTS:

Fear Power God: CD

Long ago, punk rock was just as much about exchanging ideas as it

was about getting drunk and singing about getting drunk. Oftentimes, these ideas came from places that weren't popular, or danced around the extreme edges of countercultural thought, but the prevailing line of thought was that one was intelligent enough to make one's own decisions on what one believed and what one thought was total bullshit—in effect, think for yourself—rather than pick a side and refuse to listen to, read, or intelligently assess anything that might upset one's personal intellectual status quo. Originally released twenty-one years ago by Whipping Boy's (now Oxbow's) front man Eugene Robinson as an audio accompaniment to his *Birth of Tragedy* magazine, this compilation is a collection of mostly spoken word pieces from various corners of the underground circa-1988—Lydia Lunch, Allen Ginsberg, Anton LaVey, Charles Manson, Henry Rollins, Mr. V.O. Real, Lawrence Ferlinghetti, Matt Heckert, and Whipping Boy—addressing the concepts behind the three words in the title. Some of the material is a bit dated, some is dubiously recorded at best, some of it reeks of pomposity, but all of it is worth at least a listen and will no doubt offend someone's sensitivities in some way, just as it should. —Jimmy Alvarado (Blackhouse)

VARIOUS ARTISTS:

Haunted Town Records Sampler: CD

The heyday of the label sampler seems to be gone. I remember about

ten years ago, it was the prime way to get some songs by a bunch of bands on the cheap, not to mention discover some new bands without having to commit to a full length (for the kids out there, this was before downloading on the net). Well it's time to party like it's 1997! There are some good bands on Haunted Town Records. Naked Raygun(!), Norman Bates & The Showerheads, Deadline, 7 Shot Screamers and more. Some punk rock, oi, rockabilly... Good times all around. -Ty Stranglehold (Haunted Town)

VARIOUS ARTISTS:

Toronto's Burning: LP

As both snapshots in time and documenting a particular period, *Toronto's Burning* is the perfect follow-up to the previously released *Toronto City Omnibus* that the same label put out a few years ago. It's a grouping of current bands from Toronto, Canada, that are not Fucked Up or Career Suicide. Included are a wide variety of punk and metal influenced bands. Black Spokes start things off with a real bang with their angry-edged punk. Madmen give one track of tribal-like drumming and a dirge of dirty noise that sounds circa '79. Living Darkness pull out the Kylesa meets D-Beat card that darkens the mood for their time slot. U.T.I. have a vocalist that shrills so high that it seems it can break glass. The band backs it up with some rawly recorded mid-tempo to fast punk. Urban Blight ends things by blasting through two

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short and fast numbers that felt like two quick kicks in the nads. The Reprobates start off the flipside with their personal flavor of raw-sounding punk that sounds like it easily could have been on Mystic Records. The Dangerloves slow and soften the moment with some female-led indie pop. Rammer—some on the East Coast might remember as the backing band for Toxic Holocaust for one tour—bring back the energy with some fuckin' metal. Hazardous Waste, who I thought would be thrash metal, surprises me with their Career Suicide-like punk. School Jerks finished off the whole shebang sounding to me like *Nervous Breakdown*-era Black Flag. —Donofthedead (Schizophrenic)

VITAMIN X: *Full Scale Assault*: CD

Hot damn, whatta rager! This new full length from Vitamin X simply kicks fucking ass. This band has finally managed to harness their live energy onto a recording and the results are jaw dropping. There are some serious '70s rock action riffs to be found here as well. It's always risky to mix up hard rock and hardcore, but when it works it is one of the best sounds going. The Albin production on this record is huge and it sounds great, maybe the best production I have ever heard on a hardcore record. It still sounds crisp and raw but it also sounds huge. I wish more hardcore sounded like this. —Mike Frame (Tankcrimes)

VÖTSEK: *Infernal Command*: LP

Tight as fuck speed metal/hardcore crossover-type stuff from a band

featuring Athena Dread on bass. They don't whip up the maelstrom that Slayer can on a good day, but they definitely can hold their own with most treading on this path. The lyrics are a nice balance between the angry and silly, and they get bonus kudos for snatching the title of "oddest cover of 'Strange Fruit'" away from the previous titleholders, Cocteau Twins. —Jimmy Alvarado (Tankcrimes)

WAU Y LOS ARRGRHS: *Vienien*: CD

Farfisa-soaked trash rock from Ethpaña, fronted by a dude that sounds like Nina Hagen at her most guttural. While the genre they live in has been so raped and pillaged that it's damn hard to find much worth paying more than passing attention to, the sheer exuberance they pack into every second of this makes it worth more than a few listens. —Jimmy Alvarado (Slovenly)

WHITE NIGHT: *Self-titled*: Cassette

White Night play the pop punk that make me feel like a freshman in high school all over again. Fast, basic, tight, rad. The recording quality on the cassette isn't as great as the digital versions I've heard, but hearing it on tape just kicks up the nostalgia another notch. It makes me want to pogo at the old Soma on Moreno Boulevard and be fifteen again. I was surprised to see this was recorded in Vista, Ca. I lived there briefly, in order to graduate after being expelled from the San Diego High School District, and I've

never been to a more boring town in my life. I'm glad to know something rad happened there besides me buying my first Sonic Youth album. These are some great jams that make me want to bust out my skateboard and maybe find my old wallet chain. —Rene Navarro (Burger)

WOLFRIGADE: *Comalive*: LP

A million times better than I was expecting, and I was expecting quite a bit. Since the days when they were known as Wolfpack, these guys have been a consistent favorite, so the bar is always raised high. They have a habit of raising that bar a bit higher all the time. I did think the last couple records, though not horrible, were not as awesome as the previous (I'm still keeping them in my collection, no doubt). Here, they deliver in full. Sonic D-beat that obliterates all in its path. Makes most seem like amateurs. All thirteen songs are absolute rippers. They can hammer down like no tomorrow and hit you with a melody at the same time. If you like bands like Tragedy, or the Victims, then you need to get this. Wolfbrigade were doing it before them and all that have followed, and really, doing it better. "Skulls of Doom" is unbelievable. The tempo is raging, guitars are thrashing, drums are crashing, then here comes this melodic guitar over the noisy din that sends it over the edge. Fuggin' awesome! Every song is a jaw dropper. There's a song like "Barren Dreams" that rages, then

there's "The Race of the Wrath" that goes even further. Raging like mad, then they shift to a mid-tempo break and back to the fast and speedy in a blink. It may be premature to state this, but this album is a classic. Easily. —M.Avg (Deranged)

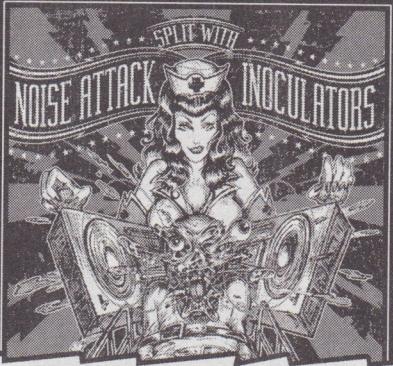
ZANN / BURIAL YEAR: *Split* LP

Crusty march-core—this stuff isn't what I reach for first, but when done well, it stands up as well as anything out there. Actually, a lot of the record, both bands, reminds me of early Buzzoven stuff, which is one of the reasons that I liked both sides. I've got a problem with the Burial Year stuff, though. Musically, it's pretty muscular and brutal (Zann, too), but there's this part where the vocalist is blabbing about our need to make choices regarding the planet and we've got to do it quick, suggesting that we need to make choices to save the planet from things like pollution and global warming, but the record has gatefold packaging, which, by its very nature, would require twice as many trees and would require twice as much carbon dioxide poundage to produce. What the fuck? I like the record and all and I want to be optimistic (maybe somebody not in association with Burial Year chose such packaging), but such mixed messages leave a really sour taste in my mouth. —The Lord Kveldulfr (Adagio 830)

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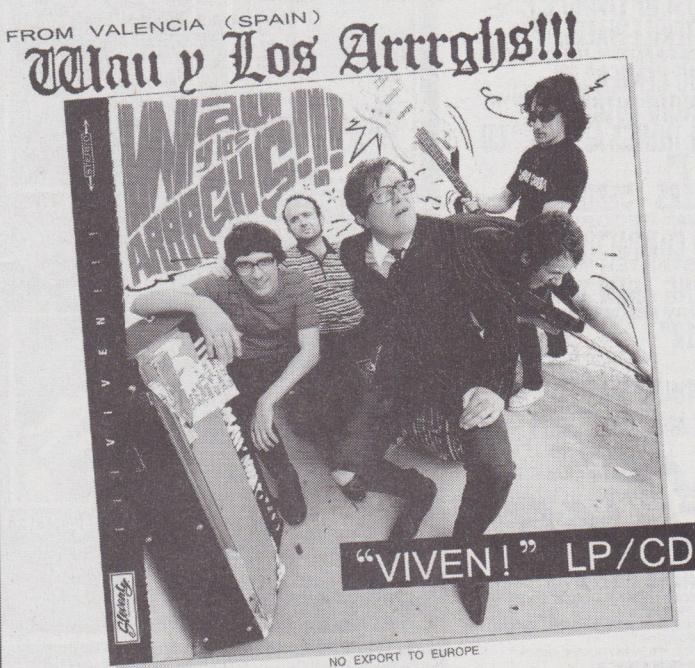
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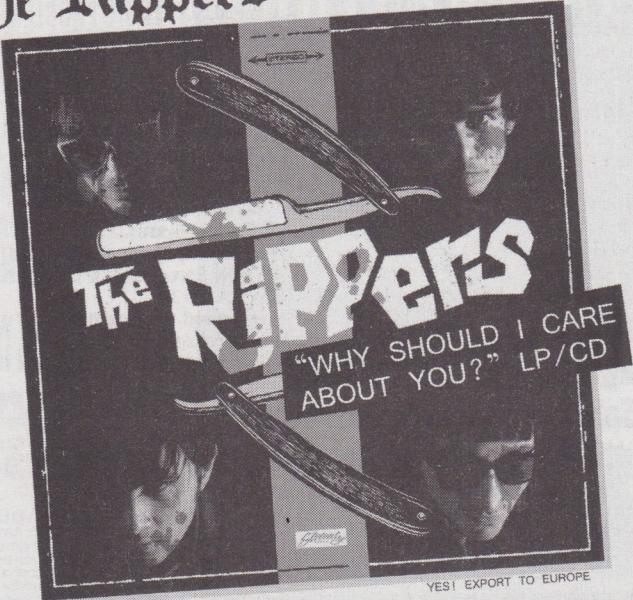
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- **Salinas**, PO Box 2802, Detroit, MI 48202
- **Sandwich Man**, 2450 N. Pierce St., Milwaukee, WI 53212-2953
- **Schizophrenic**, 17 W 4th St., Hamilton, Ontario L9C 3M2, Canada
- **Screaming Crow**, 4407 Bowes Ave., West Mifflin, PA 15122
- **Sickroom**, PO Box 47830, Chicago, IL 60647
- **Sidecho**, 2300 Walnut Ave., Suite K, Signal Hill, CA 90755
- **Sinkhole Texas**, 1707 Austin Ave., College Station, TX 77845
- **Slab-O-Wax**, PO Box 461082, San Antonio, TX 78246
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- **Small Pool**, 637 W Woodcrest Ave., Fullerton, CA 92832
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- **Super Secret**, PO Box 1585, Austin, TX 78767
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- **Tankcrimes**, PO Box 3495, Oakland, CA 94609
- **Terror .45**, PO Box 17077, Encino, CA 91416
- **Thorlock**, c/o Luke Koontz, 204 W. Washington St., #5, Jackson, MO 63755
- **Tongues**, 212 N Sawyer, Chicago IL, 60647
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- **Whoa! Boat**, PO Box 2672, Seattle, WA 98111
- **Witch Hunt**, PO Box 30923, Philadelphia, PA 19104
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- **Youngblood**, PO Box 236, Ephrata, PA 17522
- **Zodiac Killer**, 1733 Iron Mountain Rd., Cheyenne, WY 82009

ZINE REVIEWS

Send all zines for review to:
Razorcake,
PO Box 42129, LA, CA.
Please include a postal
address (that's how we trade),
the number of pages, the price,
and whether or not you accept trades.

A ZINE FOR THE LADIES #2, \$?, 5 1/2" x 8 1/2", copied, 44 pgs.
The first page of this new issue reprints some rare praise from yours truly, first seen in *Razorcake* #47. Now the reason I was so stoked on this zine originally is because it seemed like the message was just, "There isn't enough presence of women in punk rock. Let's give some exposure to the ladies who are doing awesome stuff." *A Zine for the Ladies* #2 doesn't match the greatness of the zine's debut because many of the interview questions try to pick apart the issue of gender inequality in the punk scene, and worse, the answers tend to place the blame on girls who "aren't doing enough" to make a change. I think that the editors made a mistake by talking about what they have a problem with instead of focusing on providing a solution. It emphasizes perceived gender differences when every interview with a woman involved in punk rock has to talk about the fact that she's, well, a woman involved in punk rock. The fact that all the interview subjects are women is a statement enough. —Lauren Trout (southcoastvegan@hotmail.co.uk)

ABSENT-CAUSE #2, \$4, Photocopied, 5.5" x 8.5", 96 Pgs.
The theme of this issue of *Absent Cause* is duality. The editor describes that as "(living) in one world while struggling for another, better one." This manifests itself on the page as personal essays about body issues, transgender fiction, and, erm, "cathartic" poetry. There are also eight color pages of art in the middle. There are a ton of contributors, with a variety of quality of material, but there is something in here for you if you are interested in, to paraphrase the abstract inside the front cover, *Underground cultures, hidden histories, feminist and queer sexualities, chosen families and radical politics; the gothic, horror; surviving abuse, coping with mental illness.* —CT Terry (PO Box 1568, New York, NY 10276)

BLACK, THE CLOUD #2, \$1, two stamps, or trade. 5 1/2" x 8 1/2", photocopied.

I picked this out of the review bin because it has a picture of Boom Boom Kid on the cover, and if you can get down to Boom Boom Kid, then we are good and tight. *The Black Cloud* is a Columbus, OH-based zine that is a bit of a punk perzine. Some comics, loads of pictures from different punk shows (Bent Outta Shape, Japanner, Lucero, etc.), and a couple brief stories about the publisher's introduction to and involvement with punk rock, with particular emphasis on Ohio. Cut and paste layout, photocopied, and stapled. A fun little bit of bathroom reading. Nice pick-up if you're into punk photography and regional scenes. —Jeff Proctor (369 E. 15th Ave., Columbus, OH, 43201)

DUDES MAGAZINE #13, \$5, 8 1/2" x 11", printed with glossy cover, 60 pgs. I know there's a target audience out there for this, but I'm just not it. Imagine a brodown in magazine format and you have *Dudes Magazine*. If that appeals to you, then by all means order this. There are columns, bar reviews, band interviews (e.g. The Arrivals), a crossword that's actually a word find, and an insert of record reviews you can take to the record store with you. The dudes have their own language, so they've included a glossary, which admittedly wasn't very helpful. What was saddest about this was the columns from the dudes who have gotten married and are having kids; it pained me to read their desperate rationalizations of conspicuous absences from the weekly brodowns. The one item I found of interest was the column from a soldier relating some of his harrowing experiences while serving in Afghanistan. Also included is a CD of punk Dudes Tunes. —Sean Stewart (Dudes Magazine, 3872-A Connecticut Street, Saint Louis, MO 63116, www.dudessmag.com)

ELEVEN: ELEVEN, \$?, 5 1/2" x 8 1/2", printed, 24 pgs.

A vague, dreamy piece of fiction



"A carefree summer where the biggest emergencies involve the lack of vegan options at rest stops."

—CT Terry
OUR LIVES #1

written in short, detached prose that mentions suicide like it's glamorous and drug abuse like it's romantic and amounts to being a piece of ambitious, naïve, and pretentious garbage. —Lauren Trout (ditchpoetry.com/trainwreckpress.htm)

FOREVER SOLVE, 5 1/2" x 8 1/2", 48 pgs., \$2.00, photocopied
This is a requiem to a young Chicago graffiti artist, Solve, who was murdered. It basically just consists of different family and friends reminiscing about him. It's kind of odd to get something like this to review, because I really don't think it will mean much to people who weren't involved in Solve's life. It's kind of like going to a funeral of someone you don't know. However, this is a good example of the versatility of the zine medium. If this guy were my friend, it would be quite a keepsake. —Craven Rock (Loop Distro, PO Box 470507, Chicago, IL, 60647-0507, www.loopdistro.com)

JERK STORE #5, 5 1/2" x 11", 48 pgs., xeroxed
Formerly *Black Lesbian President*, this zine left quite an impression on me. It's very uncommon for me to read an entire zine front to back, but I just couldn't help it with this one. It featured interviews with bands I was familiar with (Party Garbage, Get Bent, Dear Landlord, Lucero) and some I wasn't (Abortions, Cold Ones), but I still read them all. Even the interview that was done via email was edited so well that I felt like I was reading a conversation and not an email, which matters! It's also great to read *Jerk Store*'s record reviews because he picks up a lot of badass records, so rather than giving a damn about every fifth record review, I was curious about his opinion on almost all of them. While some may think that this zine is laid out in a boring, artless manner, I believe the consistency, the placement of the images (as well as the no-frills but practical Photoshopping for photocopying), and directness of the content stands for more than a barbed wire border or ransom font title

ever will. The only thing I can't get over is that he got his hands on a copy of *Career Suicide's Cherry Beach 7*. When's #6 coming out? —Daryl (Jerk Store, 14 Spring Gardens Terrace, Cardiff, CF241QX, Great Britain)

LEVIL UNIFORM #11, Free, 5" x 8", printed, 30 pgs.
Rock and fucking roll, man. Black and white, thick paper stock, and obviously lovingly laid-out by its designers, *Levil Uniform* is a bunch of skaters and metalheads interviewing semi-sweet bands and taking really nice pictures of their friends pulling off crazy shit. It's free and totally decent and there is really no reason not to grab one if you see it. If the zine were composed solely of their fake Silver Age comic book ads, if their interviews with bands and skaters and artists were done away with, it would still be better than so so. —Andrew Flanagan (Levil Uniform, 3004 NE 68th, Portland, OR 97213)

MAXIMUM ROCKNROLL #309, \$4 U.S. and Canada, 8 1/2" x 11", newsprint. Everything you've come to love (or hate) about *MRR* is here in issue #309. Felix Havoc runs a rebuttal to the Record Bubble article that ran in *Razorcake* #47. Al Quint (who interviews Vitamin X in *Razorcake* #49) painstakingly researches and details punk and hardcore bands that I will never listen to. Bill Florio dabbles in psychobabble while George Tabb tells us what the hot new video games are for each gaming system. And then there's the ever-controversial Mykel Board, masturbating while watching the presidential election results come in. There is a nice obituary to Jamie Ewing, interviews with Australia's Ooga Booga, Mr. California, and more, more, more. Plus a Lance Hahn article on Null and Void. —Jeff Proctor (Maximum Rocknroll, PO Box 460760, SF, CA 94146)

MONGREL ZINE #3, 48 pgs., \$? *Mongrel Zine* seems to have two primary functions, both laudable: discuss underground art and conduct

interviews with bands orbiting in the garage rock galaxy or close thereto. Forgive me, folks, if I've painted a picture that's too simple. On the art end in this issue were interviews with Rick Trembles and the "Gallery Spotlight," which seems as if it's a regular feature. Music features include interviews with Mark Sultan, the Tranzmitors, the Pointed Sticks, Stolen Minks, Defektors, and Bloodshot Bill. It's been my experience that a zine that has an art focus is a dicey prospect because art, for some reason, often has a side effect of chronic pretentiousness. That's not the case here. Everything within this zine appears to be handled with a great deal of glee and good humor. Recommended. —The Lord Kveldulfr (mongrelzine@gmail.com)

NO FUTURE #2, 2 1/4" x 8 1/2", 11 pgs., full-color, This is a short zine consisting of reprinted news articles, which are of interest to the zine creator for some reason or other. You're better off going online and reading whatever news stories you want at your own discretion. —Craven Rock (2421 W. Jefferson St., Phoenix, AZ 85009)

OUR LIVES! #1, \$4, Photocopied, 5.5" x 8.5", 32 Pgs. A carefree summer where the biggest emergencies involve the lack of vegan options at rest stops, and having your car break down an hour from the Defiance, Ohio show. In the wake of a breakup and an ill-fated band tour, Alex decides to pay off some debts by traveling with his family to Native American pow

Usually, the best scenes are the ones that get wholly ignored. —Andrew Flanagan (Roadkill, 3324 Troost Avenue, Kansas City, MO 64109)

ROADKILL, Vol. 1 Issues 1-4, free with donation of your soul, 7" x 8 1/2", copied, avg. 30 pgs.

It's always interesting to read several issues of a new zine one right after the other and see how they progress. Many zines go through a transitional period before they find their stride. Such is definitely the case with *Roadkill*. The first issue made absolutely no sense to me. It was a mishmash of fliers, photocopied artwork, a crossword puzzle, and a manifesto about cannibalism. Issue two was a bit more cohesive, and I gradually began to perceive the

up with. Send copies of your zine out everywhere, son, because that's how you get the word out. Maybe some of those punk rock zine reviewers will tell you that the music industry is built to keep the outsiders looking in, but don't listen to them kid, because they don't even get paid. —Lauren Trout (scenetrash.com)

SIC BOI #2, \$?, 5 1/2" x 8 1/2", copied, 20 pgs.

The author is in jail and it's not like there's a ton of resources to put together a killer zine in there, so this is pretty subpar stuff. The cover made me cringe—a drawing of a naked lady with angel wings whose hair hangs over her bare chest and has a sculpted, long-haired guy kneeling right in front of her. The zine gets worse with the story of why

"It's more a piece of overlooked modern Americana than just a zine."

—Andrew Flanagan
ROADKILL #5

MONGREL ZINE #4, \$?, 9" x 7", copied, 84 pgs.

A music magazine with an overwhelming amount of content where interviews with bands including The Gruesomes, Thee B-Sides, Thee Manipulators, and the Vicious Cycles take up most of the space. However, an interview and some photos from photographer Bev Davies are really the highlight of this zine. Just like her photos of everyone from the Rolling Stones to DOA show some grit and take you into the moment, this long, well-researched interview digs deep into Ms. Davies' past rock'n'roll lifestyle. I'm not crazy about the featured artist Holly Ruth Anderson's style, but all of her drawings are of naked pin-up type girls, if you're into that kind of thing. Overall, this is a solid zine that still seems lukewarm to me, possibly because it is lacking a unifying theme. —Lauren Trout (mongrelzine@gmail.com)

NEGATIVE REACTION £4, 8 1/2" x 11", printed, 32 pgs.

I'm sorry, but if you write on your cover that you have an interview with Anthrax and it's not the same Anthrax we all know and love, then that's just fucking wrong. (Evidently, there was a punk Anthrax in England back in the day.) Anywho, this is a fanzine of the punk and oi type with interviews of Kunt And The Gang, The Dispomaniacs, Gimp Fist, D'Corner Bois, and author Dave Hann. There is also a healthy mix of music, zine, and live show reviews, including some columns, to boot. The author kind of suggests, however, that this might be the last issue. We'll see. —Kurt Morris (trevhagl@hotmail.com)

wows, where he will make money by dancing in contests. Intriguing, right? I wish there was more about the pow wows in the zine. Instead, the bulk of the material is blurred out, writing about coffee'd-up nights with friends and visits to vegan cafes. Nothing new there. It just seemed like this kid was trying to place himself within the punk culture, as opposed to talking more about his fascinating family life. Reading this zine, I was struck by the consumerism that comes with the politicized vegan movement. Not a page goes by where Alex doesn't talk about blowing his scant funds at certain restaurants or eating specific brands of food (that are often, to his credit, stolen). It reads like a caffeinated, sleep-deprived hitchhiker in the passenger seat and gets an A for enthusiasm, but a C- for priorities. —CT Terry (Raise Your Fist, 571 St. John St., Afton, NY 13730)

ROADKILL #5, \$?, 7" x 7", copied, 22 pgs. This zine seems so representative of where it comes from and its likely pinky-small scene—the grey and relegated flyover of Kansas City—that it's more a piece of overlooked modern Americana than just a zine. Yes, you have the bad poetry, the odd photography, the confessionals. But the Xeroxed show posters and mix tape potluck notices and community radio shout outs that make up the majority of the magazine give you a snapshot of Kansas City, and a place called Troost Avenue, which, from what I gather, is where all the crazy, smelly kids hang out. Never in my life have I wanted to go to Kansas City (still don't really), but this zine has made me genuinely curious about what they've got going on there.

unstated purpose of the zine. After reading all four issues, my conclusion is that this is a zine probably only of interest to Kansas City locals, and serves to promote local shows, events, and businesses, while at the same time providing some entertainment in the form of satirical essays, artwork, crossword puzzles, and band interviews. It's free, though, so if you really want to know what's going on in Kansas City (which actually seems surprisingly happening), check it out. —Sean Stewart (Roadkill, 3308 Troost, Kansas City, MO 64109, roadkillandcheapthrills@mail.org)

SCENE TRASH #29, \$?, 5 1/2" x 8 1/2", copied, 36 pgs.

People who subscribe to mainstream music tastes could just go ahead and get a subscription to *Rolling Stone* to get their fill of inside information, too. But what if you want to be a part of the action, the kind of person who others will look at to find out what's cool? You had better make a name for yourself, boy, and maybe your ticket to Hollywood will be earned by your reputation as a hardworking writer who can spot the Next Big Thing with your music zine. You don't have the readership to justify a big enough print run for glossy covers, but you can print color copies yourself and it will look almost as good. You ain't got the clout to get that interview with Fall Out Boy, but keep giving them good reviews and name-dropping them in articles and maybe their publicist will return your calls. Until then, just interview some more small-time bands who can make themselves sound a lot more important by talking about how they love all their devoted fans and have more MySpace requests than they can keep

he's in jail, which has something to do with trying to get dope and one graphic, crude description of oral sex. There's also an interview with an inmate who does artwork, and some random stuff that the author apparently found interesting, like a "What life was like in 1907" factsheet. Fortunately, I couldn't relate to any of this material, but if you live in a world that's not as pretty and safe as mine, maybe you ought to get in touch with the author. —Lauren Trout (Randy Johnson F-22545, PO Box 2500, Susanville, CA 96127)

SPIDDER #12, \$?, 5 1/2" x 8 1/2", photocopied, 32 pgs.

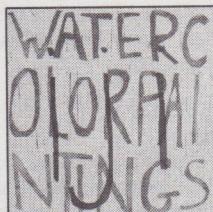
There's a quiet assurance in *Spidder*. It's a nice cross-section of written snapshots of travel, comics, and regional Tennessee/Alabama folklore. It's primarily all handwritten and hand drawn, and it's obvious a lot of care went into its construction. *Spidder* never seems to yell, and focuses on even-toned retellings of quiet pride of where the author(s) live, both geographically and ethically. So, while other zines may get more instant attention or rely on the overused "coffee/bike/vegan/crush/you'll never feel the pain I'm feeling" material to tap into a ready-made audience, *Spidder* is spinning ghost stories, retelling strange payment situations, and making comics that feature a burnt kernel of popcorn and a stale pretzel getting harassed by cans of booze. —Todd (Arkam, 1925 Hwy 69 S., Savannah, TN 38372)

SPIT AND SUGAR: EVOLUTION OF SMOKE, 8 1/2" x 11", photocopied, 21 pgs.

This is a chapbook of stream-of-consciousness poetry that I

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couldn't make heads or tails out of. I'm clueless as to how to go about reviewing this because I just didn't get a damned word of it, so I guess this is where I'll stop. —Craven Rock (singlepresse@yahoo.com)

SURE6?, Vol. 1, \$3.50, 5 3/4" x 8 1/4", copied, 26 pgs.

Sure was (is?) an Australian zine. In its sixth issue, editor Kane posed

some local references I didn't catch, but, overall, this is a great concept that I really enjoyed. —Sean Stewart (Elle 36, GPO Box 4201, Melbourne, Vic 3001 Australia, threeandsix@gmail.com)

UNDERWORLD CRAWL #6, \$2 or

trade, 5 1/2" x 8 1/2", copied, 28 pgs. I knew this zine was going to be great when I read the intro and the author R. Lee talks about finding renewed

it's just great storytelling that avoids moralizing or making things fit into some "big picture." It's simple and interesting. A new classic to me. —Lauren Trout (R. Lee, PO Box 1421, Oshkosh, WI 54903)

URINAL GUM #7, \$2, quarter size, copied, 42 pgs.

Come up with your own reasons why someone would publish a zine like

from Melbourne, Australia. It's basically just two envelopes glued together with a few pages of writing inside. It's the sort of thing that probably took one hour to write and five hours to assemble. It's about making a mix tape, but also not really about anything; just a short letter from one zinester to the other. Ack! —Maddy (www.stickyinstitute.com)

"It's kind of like going to a funeral of someone you don't know."

—Craven Rock, *FOREVER SOLVE*

twenty standardized questions to twenty zinesters and comic artists. The editor of *Sure6?* (the pseudonymous Elle 36) liked the result so much that, with Kane's blessing, she reincarnated the idea about ten years later. This is volume one of what she hopes to be an ongoing "by invitation only" project. Elle modified or rephrased some of Kane's questions and added some of her own, ending up with a total of twenty-two questions. The questions are insightful, the type that zinesters are likely to appreciate, and the result captures much of what publishing a zine is all about. The zinesters interviewed are all Australian, and so there were

motivation to write after finding an issue of *Eaves of Ass* by Craven Rock. Can't tell you how many times I've flipped open that worn copy of *EOA* #6 to meditate on how to give a piece of writing some voice; make it sing. I agree with R. Lee that *EOA* is "about as perfect as anything I've ever read." The product of this influence, combined with uniqueness and similarly skillful writing, is *Underworld Crawl #6*. Contained within are eleven short, well-written pieces about everyday encounters with the people around him and his reactions to said characters and situations. Can't explain why this zine is so remarkable to me; maybe

this—stories and fake advice columns written in the voice of pathetic and clueless people on topics like rape, adultery, and herpes. I still wouldn't think this was funny or even be able to appreciate the tongue-in-cheek irony if I was twelve. I wouldn't have reviewed this zine if I didn't have to. It's not worth giving the author the negative attention that he is apparently desperate for. —Lauren Trout (PO Box 1243, Eugene, OR 97440)

YOU / ON WEDNESDAY, split zine, free in Australia, 8 1/2" x 11", photocopied, 5 pgs.

This zine is a free weekly split zine

ZINE WORLD, #27, 8 1/2" x 11", 40 pgs., photocopied, \$4.00 U.S./\$5.00 Can. This *Zine World* has some interesting stuff on the growing obsolescence of the print review zine (the topic is based around *Xerography Debt* going online). It has stuff on zine networking websites and selling online, as well as all the more info pertinent to ziners and tons of quality reviews. —Craven Rock (Zine World, PO Box 330156, Murfreesboro, TN 37133-0156, www.undergroundpress.org)

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BOOK REVIEWS



Hawaii Punk

By Raoul Vehill, 399 pgs.

Countless novels and films have romanticized the untamed spirit of youth. Punk rock itself has always embodied the devil-may-care attitude that defines being young. We worship at the altar of youth, celebrate it in pop culture... struggle to grasp onto it as we age. Sometimes, though, in our zeal to embrace the child inside, we manage to overlook one key thing...

Young people are fucking stupid.

Hawaii Punk, a partially fictionalized account of Raoul Vehill's time in the early '80s Hawaiian punk scene illustrates this point in extreme detail. The book follows Paul Cruz aka "Pig Rock," head vocalist of a local punk band called God Dog (chosen because it can be spelled the same backwards and forwards). Paul spends most of his time crashing on couches, going to strip clubs, playing shows, doing cocaine... and chasing high school girls. Scratch that, he spends basically ninety-eight percent of his time chasing high school girls. For the majority of the novel he seems to be having a pretty damn good time, but eventually his hard partying ways catch up with him and send the young man into a spiral of harder drugs, harder love, and eventual chilling violence.

This book is a hard one to love initially. I couldn't really sympathize with the lead, who didn't have any problem breaking underage chick's hearts, just so he could latch onto the next waiting girl. Chapters and chapters are filled with nothing but long descriptions of his pining for a young girl, his pursuit of the young girl... and a highly detailed sex scene with said young girl. Then he'd breakup, and we'd start fresh in the next chapter. It's actually pretty maddening. The prose isn't spectacular, and it's hard to grasp deeper meaning beyond the character's love of sex.

Yeah, I get it, young people really like to party, but I kind of wanted to get a better sense of what the actual Hawaiian punk rock scene was like at that time—or any time—for that matter. After the eighth sex scene, you start to wonder what the point is. It's only towards the very end of the book when the author's intent becomes clear, and by then the consequences of the lead character's actions hits you like a ton of lead. There's a method to the madness here. I was taken by surprise, and ultimately rewarded by sticking around for the final pages.

Hawaii Punk reminds us that even though it is a real blast to be young, there are plenty of casualties on the road to adulthood... and in the end, young people are just really fucking stupid. —Evan Katz (Enlightened Pyramid Publications, www.enlightened-pyramid.com/)

Infinity Blues

By Ryan Adams, 275 pgs.

I might as well come right out and admit that I do not understand or have any sort of appreciation for poetry. I feel so unknowledgeable about the topic of poetry that I do not even feel that I can give an idea of whether a poem is good or bad. It just does not make any sense to me. When I read it, I feel like I may as well be looking at plans to assemble a machine or the molecular makeup of something. It just does not compute and I have spent enough time trying that I have to realize it is just not my thing.

I have a very strong opinion about Ryan Adams, however, so I was interested to check out this book when I received it for review. Ryan Adams is one of the most frustrating songwriters I have ever encountered. About seventy percent of what he releases does not interest me in the least

and I have not grown to appreciate his dramatic style of dealing with the press and crowds at his concerts.

That other thirty percent though.... When he is on, as with the *Cold Roses* double LP, he is one of the greatest songwriters who has ever existed. I do not understand how these disparate styles can come from the same person. I have found this strange for a long time now.

So, yeah, *Infinity Blues* is 275 pages of poetry from Ryan Adams. Akashic Books did a great job with the package. The cover and the paper are high quality and look great. I read several of the poems and they seem the same as any other poetry I have read, which is to say I did not understand it and would have absolutely no idea whether it is good or not. If you are a fan of poetry, I would recommend checking it out. Someone who is one of the best songwriters in the whole world thirty percent of the time is likely to be quite a poet as well. Ryan Adams certainly knows how to turn a phrase and that seems to be highly prized quality when composing something along the lines of a book like this. —Mike Frame (Akashic Books)

New Skateboard Graphics

By J. Namdev Hardisty, foreword by Michael Leon, 144 pgs.

Don't go into this expecting another *Disposable*. This is quite different. Though a collection of skateboard art, this is more in the present than in the past. And more than a collection of graphics, Hardisty and Leon both implant in your mind the thought about today's intent of the artwork chosen. They both bring up how marketing and competing for your attention amongst the sea of other companies has directed what the bottom of today's skateboards look like. Some are individualized, and many are going for a more instantly recognizable brand. Good or bad, I imagine that's to be decided individually. Both options present challenges that produce interesting results. You can see that here.

The companies showcased within are 5Boro, Bueno, Chocolate, City, Element, Enjoi, Foundation, Girl, Heroin, Hessenmob, Hopps, Mystery, Popwar, Rasa Libre, Skate Mental, Slave, Stereo Sound Agency, Toy Machine, and Zero. I've spent some hours looking at this book, much the same way I used to look at *Thrasher* in the '80s and the ads, studying them for all the boards with their various shapes and graphics, making mental notes about which boards I'd like to own. Of the companies featured in here, the graphics that stood out the most were from Bueno, Toy Machine, Zoo York, most of the Chocolate section, and 5Boro, in particular, with its mix of modernist cartoon, clip art, and hip hop.

At the back are interviews with some of the artists behind the graphics. My only complaint with this is I wish the interviews were personalized instead of asking the same set of questions. Other than that, this book is great, right down to the front cover, which looks like wood and has a square of clear coat with the title, author, and other information. Go to any book store and you will find a lot of books about skate graphics, and most of them suck. *New Skateboard Graphics* however, is worth picking up, and like the previously mentioned *Disposable*, this is one to keep. —M.Avg (Mark Batty Publisher, 36 W 37th St., Ste. 409, New York, NY 10018, www.markbattypublisher.com)

Personality Crisis: Warm Beer & Wild Times

By Chris Walter, 217 pgs.

Personality Crisis could very well be the greatest band to ever slip through the cracks. Sure, they are the stuff of legend throughout most of Canada—and perhaps San Francisco and Minneapolis—but other than that, they are in the realm of diehard fans and record collectors. Only having one (amazing) record that has been long out of print (until very recently), hasn't helped the band either. Chris Walter is out to change that, though.

The book chronicles the beginnings of the band in the late '70s in Winnipeg when punk rock was beginning to rear its ugly head, the band's various personnel changes, and their relentless tour schedules that were perhaps rivaled only by the likes of DOA or Black Flag. The anecdotes are fast and funny, often leaving me shaking my head in disbelief. I think the book truly captures what it was like to be struggling along on the road in a punk band in the early '80s. No stone is left unturned and no punches are pulled.

The book is also laid out really nicely. There are two major photo sections dispersed evenly, but throughout the entire tome there are tons of live shots, artwork, and gig posters littering the pages.

There are a couple of things that I didn't like, however. First of all, the book kind of loses steam when it veers into the history of other Winnipeg bands The Unwanted and Stretch Marks. Both are amazing and underrated bands whose stories should be told, but smack dab in the middle of *Personality Crisis* didn't seem like the place for it. I think that Walter's intimacy with the Winnipeg punk rock scene is a bit of a double edged sword. On one side, he is privy to all the best stories, having known all the principals in the book for many decades. On the other side, I think there are times in the book where it feels like he is too close to the subject.

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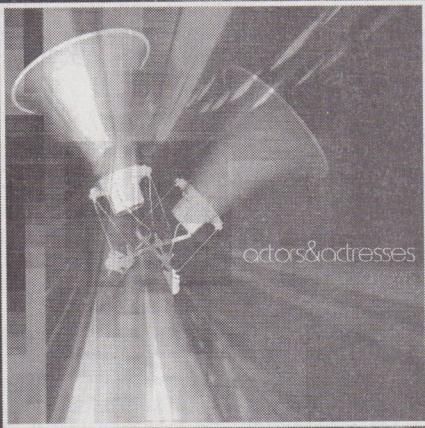
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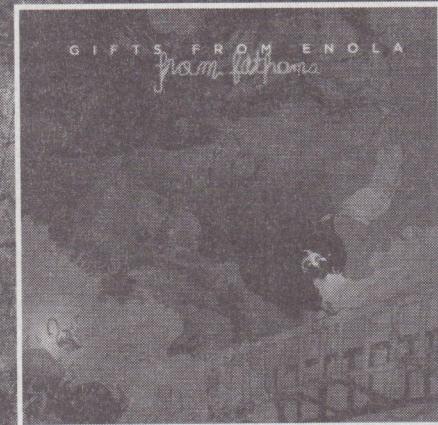
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In the end, we wind up with a very important book about a very important band. I would urge anyone and everyone to get this book and a copy of the re-issued *Creatures for Awhile* LP. Personality Crisis are really that good! —Ty Stranglehold (GFY Press, #34-2320 Woodland Drive, Vancouver BC V5N 3P2, Canada www.punkbooks.com)

Thanks And Have Fun Running The Country: Kids' Letters To President Obama

Edited by Jory John, 130 pgs.

This is a collection of letters compiled, edited, and published by the 826 National, a non-profit dedicated to instructing kids six to eighteen in creative and expository writing. The older I get, the more I realize how powerless 99.999 percent of people are when dealing with national politics. But it's like pro sports. I totally understand why these very same people get riled up and cheer, even though they're not calling the shots and will never be in the realm of offering advice to be taken seriously by those on top. So, fuck it, kids sending wishes and instructions to President Obama is as valid a form of national political interaction as almost anything else. At their core, kids want pretty much the same as adults: comfort, care, security, kindness, and a little bit extra than what they currently have, either for themselves or those who they love. And since most kids don't have to worry about rent, car insurance, or utility bills, a nice chunk of this book is concerned with foodstuffs and video game consoles transposed over politics. Amir Abdelhadi, age six, sums up the core of the book nicely. "Dear Mr. Obama... I would fill the White House with chocolate and gravy (but not together) and mashed potatoes or maybe fill it with root beer... And I'd have a pizza carpet. After we'd eaten all of our furniture, we'd buy real furniture." If that's not a metaphor for "Dear Mr. President, fix shit, enjoy yourself, don't fuck people over, and get things done," I don't know what is. Fun. —Todd (www.826national.org)

Zen Wrapped in Karma, Dipped in Chocolate: A Trip through Death, Sex, Divorce, and Spiritual Celebrity in Search of the True Dharma

By Brad Warner, 224 pgs, \$14.95

Brad Warner, who is apparently quite the rogue among the current crop of Zen Buddhists, had a pretty rough year—he and his wife split up, he lost

his dream job, and his mother and grandmother died—all in a relatively short amount of time. Living through it, processing it, and, most importantly, experiencing it all is what makes up the bulk of the material in *Zen Wrapped in Karma*. As someone who really couldn't care less about Buddhism, I've got to give it to Warner: his writing was personable enough to be engrossing, at least most of the time.

Warner—who played bass in the '80s Ohio band Zero Defex (alongside Tommy Strange of Strawman and Songs For Emma) does a reasonably nice job of toeing the line between personability and opinion. He occasionally lays down some absolutes (ala "anyone who tells you different is full of shit") regarding certain practices and beliefs in Buddhism, but most of the time he sticks solely to his own experiences, which is generally the more interesting material here. His writing style, again, is pretty humble, honest, and upfront: the book wouldn't have seemed out of place if it'd been published in zine format. I won't pretend to know word one about the precepts or practices of Buddhism, but, again, the guy puts enough jazz and humor in his lines to keep you turning the page.

The biggest complaint (and it's reasonably minor) is that about seventy-five percent of the footnotes in the book seem totally unnecessary. When they're used to remind the reader about a certain idea or piece of information about Buddhism, they're great and helpful. When they're used for cheesy one-liners or to shamelessly promote his other two books—which happens again and again—it gets tiresome.

Ultimately, by my personal standards, his writing and opinions are pretty tame, but I can certainly understand that through the eyes of many other folks, his willingness to have a forceful and outspoken opinion within a particular area of spirituality could piss a lot of people off. I don't really know if this is a book that'd be capable of turning the layman on to Buddhism or not, but it was a reasonably interesting read for someone not in the know, mostly due to the fact that the guy's personality consistently shone through. To his credit, while there were certain facets of the book I found a little irritating or unnecessary, he's written a book on a subject that I have absolutely zero interest in, and he's done it well enough that I plowed right through the thing in record time. —Keith Rosson (New World Library, 14 Paramon Way, Novato, CA 94949)



DVD REVIEWS



The Last Pogo: DVD

As much as a fan that I am of Canadian punk rock, I have to admit that my knowledge and collection are lacking in bands and information from the Eastern part of our country. I can tell you anything you need to know about The Subhumans, DOA, SNFU, Nomeansno, or Dayglo Abortions, but other than Teenage Head, The Viletones, and Forgotten Rebels, I really have no sense of history as to what was happening out there at the dawn of punk.

Well, I wonder no more, as *The Last Pogo* has been released on DVD to fill in some blanks for me. Originally filmed in 1978 at the Horseshoe Tavern on the last night of punk bands after being kicked out, the movie showcases just what was going on in Toronto back then. Of course, Teenage Head and The Viletones are here, which is to be expected, but I was truly taken aback by how much I dug the other bands on here, especially The Scenics.

Visually, the film is a sight to behold: classic grainy, '70s film at its

finest featuring a bunch of weirdoes in a really smoky bar playing strange music. I love it! It really reminds me of a live Stompin' Tom Connors movie from the same era. Something about the vibe of this film is distinctly Canadian and I like that. I'd like to think that in any city across this country that a riot would break out if you cut *Teenage Head* off after one song. This is a great little history lesson that I would recommend to anyone. —Ty Stranglehold (Last Pogo, 3003 Danforth Ave., PO Box 93634, Toronto, ON, M4C 5R4, Canada)

Population: 1: DVD

If you're looking for high end, big budget entertainment, you ain't gonna find it here. Most of this film was cribbed together from prior attempts at making a full-length feature, assorted music videos, and bits of new footage the cast and crew were able to crank out whenever funding permitted. It is disjointed, waaay too long on dialogue, and it has the feel of something that was done on the fly in some studio with people just discovering the joy of Chroma key, which makes sense because it was made three decades ago and that's pretty much what was happening.

What makes this film totally worthwhile is its principal player, Screamers lead singer Tomata du Plenty. In an accompanying interview with director Renee Daalder, he says he chose Tomata because he projected an all-American quality, and he's totally right. He appears so meek and, well, normal when he first arrives onscreen that he's almost unrecognizable. Like a chameleon, though, once he starts singing, that face burned into so many iconic photos is right there, half-mad and totally focused. The man was consummate showman, throwing himself so wholly into its premise—he is the last man on Earth, locked in a bunker and recounting his life, love, and extolling the virtues of late 20th century American culture—that he makes what could've been yet another piece of low budget, arty dreck into something that can capture the viewer's attention for the hour or so he's onscreen.

If you look closely at some of the other players that get screen time, you'll see other music and art luminaries like Blasters/Los Lobos sax man Steve Berlin, most of the other Screamers, Tequila Mockingbird, a pre-adolescent Beck and his dad David Campbell, Beck's grandpa Al Hanson, Vampira, Cherie the Penguin, Avengers singer Penelope Houston, and a

young(er) El Duce as some of the people in Tomata's reminiscences. The thing that makes this two-disc set a bona fide must-have, however, is a forty-minute Screamers live set from a 1979 show at the Whisky. The sound alone is the cleanest I've heard of the band to date, and the band is in fine form. Also included are the aforementioned conversation with Daalder, snippets from documentaries about Al Hansen and Vampira, bits of the earlier films that were strip mined to make *Population: 1*, and some music videos, most interestingly one for a Penelope Houston song called "Girls," which appears

radio show, Terminator X runs an ostrich farm in South Carolina, and Flava Flav is a popular minstrel performer on cable television.

This DVD is from a European tour that Public Enemy did in 2003, and boy did I want to like it. To place it in time, this was filmed as "Post 9-11" was becoming a common expression, but before anyone shit on the floor in an episode of *Flava of Love*. It's also over a decade after the group's commercial and creative peak.

The set leans heavily on old favorites, with some new material that

Terminator X runs an ostrich farm in South Carolina.

to be the third version of a tune originally done by the Avengers as "Second to None" and post-Sex Pistols band The Professionals as "One, Two, Three." —Jimmy Alvarado (www.cultepics.com)

Public Enemy: *Revolverlution Tour Australia 2003: DVD*

I kept my Public Enemy tapes in constant rotation in the early '90s. I was finishing grade school and these albums were full of energetic, rebellious noise that scared adults. The bulk of the politics went over my head, but the Black Power message appealed to me, a half-black kid just beginning to deal with identity issues while growing up in the suburbs of Boston: not an area where the brothers tended to congregate.

Nothing sounds like Public Enemy in their late '80s/early '90s prime. The average song has abrupt tempo 360s, James Brown drums, layers of screeching samples, sound bites from the news, car horns, fuzzed-out guitars, Chuck D's booming voice delivering a-hundred-political-revelations-a-minute lyrics, and Flava Flav's high-pitched ad-libs sprinkled across the top like a dash of parmesan. Chuck D described his group, along with the rest of hip-hop, as "Black CNN." Others called them, "punk rock for black people."

Public Enemy's popularity and creativity waned as the '90s progressed and, ironically, the alternative music scene that they fostered flourished. The group disbanded for a while, but they still pop up, self-releasing their albums and performing live. Chuck D has written a couple of books and done a

would be exciting on its own, but dulls when put next to the classics. Public Enemy performs with a DJ plus live drums and guitar, and Chuck D, Flava Flav, and Professor Griff all have mics, even though it sometimes sounds like Flav is ad-libbing over pre-recorded tracks.

The electric guitar tends to drown out the other instruments in the mix and feels tacked on to the songs that didn't originally feature guitar. The live drums are also an issue. If your songs are built around samples of James Brown songs, then a live drum version of them isn't going to sound good unless you have Clyde Stubblefield on the kit. Compared to the albums, the grooves here sound loose, and that's a bad thing when crisp drums are needed to anchor such chaotic production.

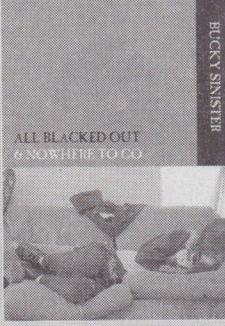
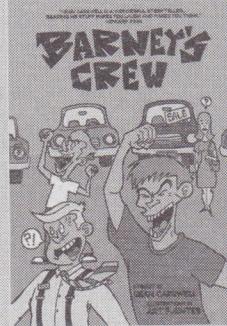
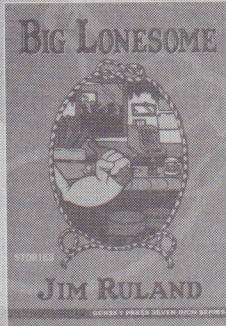
The DVD itself has cheap editing and titles, and the camera usually stays put, showing a frontal shot of the stage. There are some boring extras like a tour diary that I turned off during an extended shot of the cameraman following the group down an entire mall escalator.

In the concert, the last thing you see before the band starts is Chuck D stretching backstage, and that makes sense. The entire band's energy is on high, with Griff running around in front of the S1Ws, Flav's comical capers, and Chuck D bellowing at the audience. The crowd goes wild. The high-spirited stage show is the DVD's saving grace, but more than anything else, I wish I'd been at the show, where I could have been caught in the moment and the weak sound wouldn't have been such a hindrance. —CT Terry (Charly Films)

To read more DVD reviews, go to www.razorcake.org.

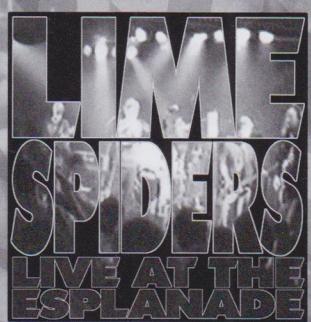


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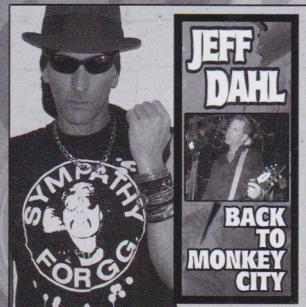
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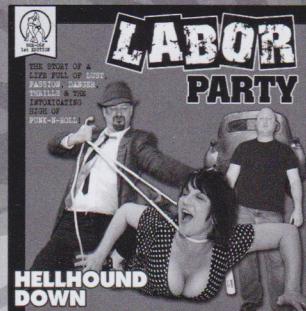
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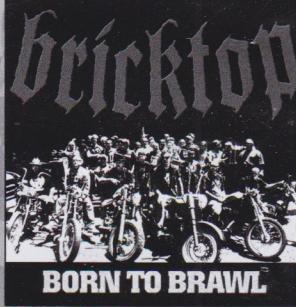
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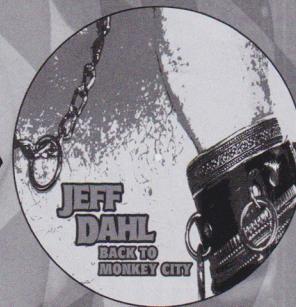
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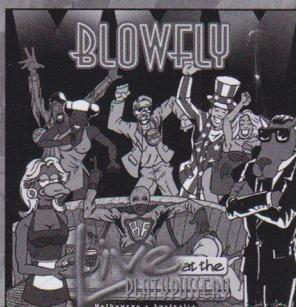
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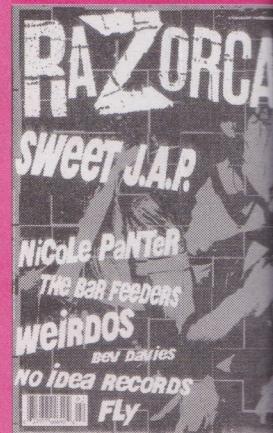
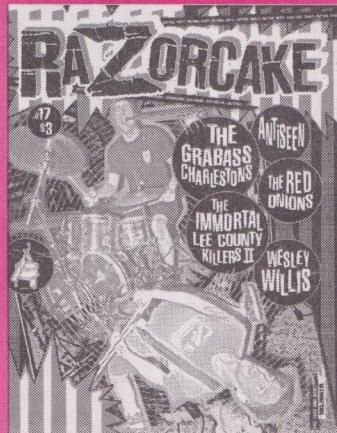
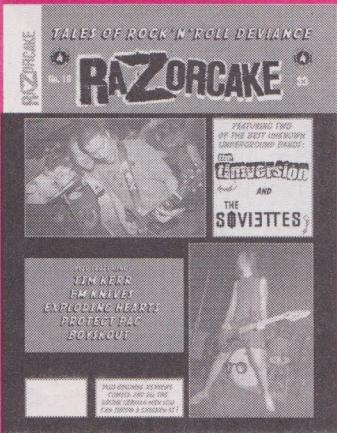
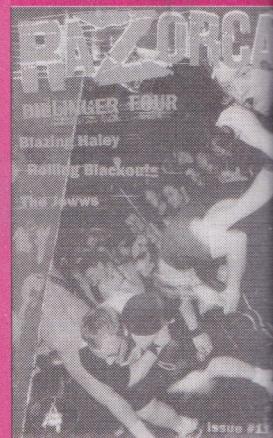
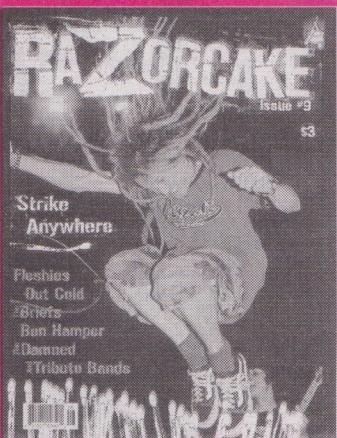
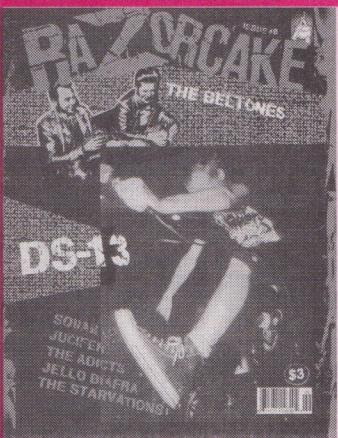
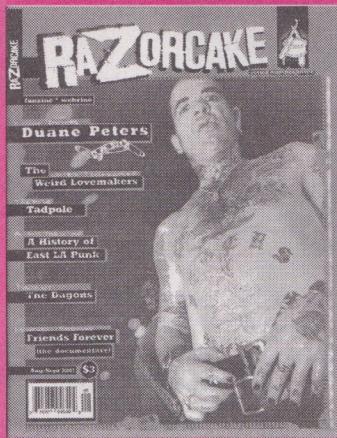
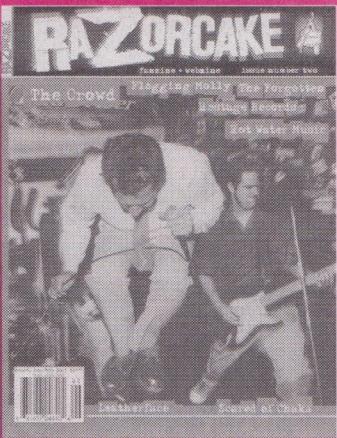
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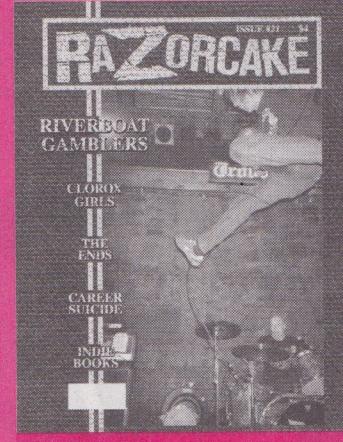
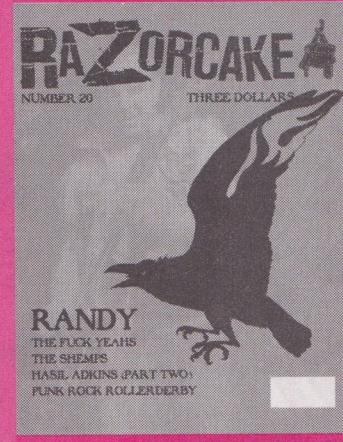
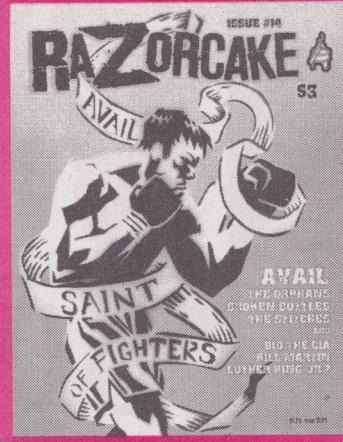
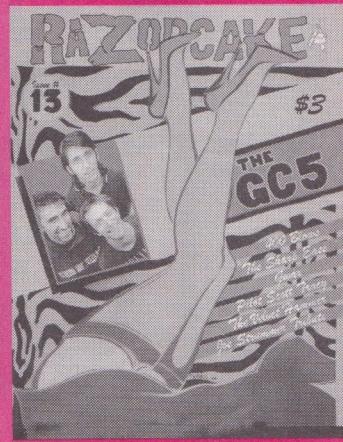
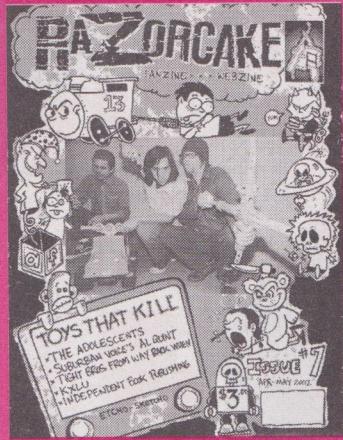
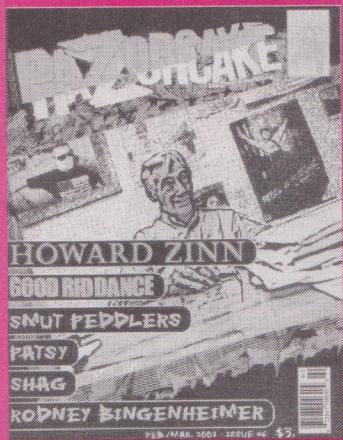
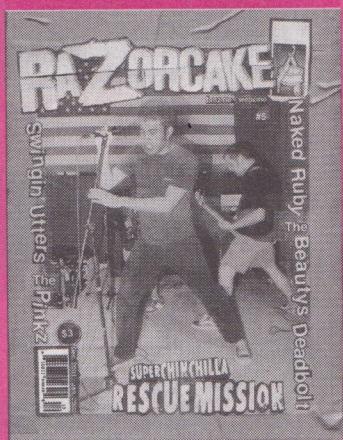
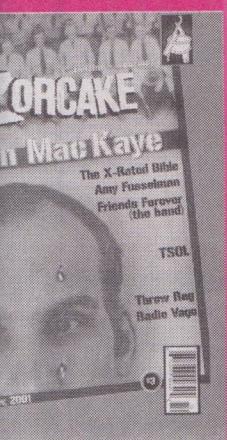
-Davey Havoc, AFI

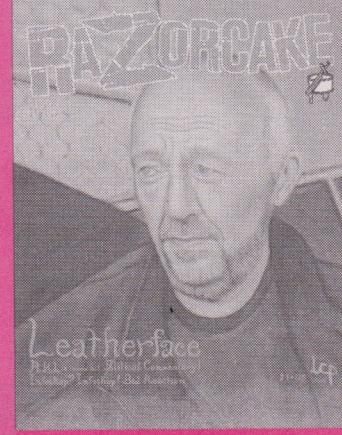
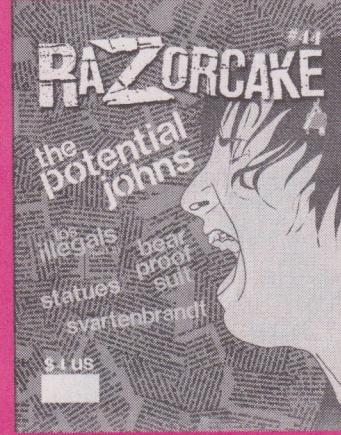
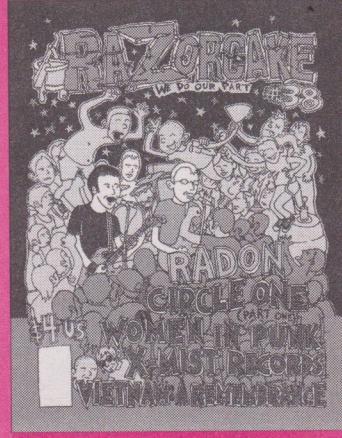
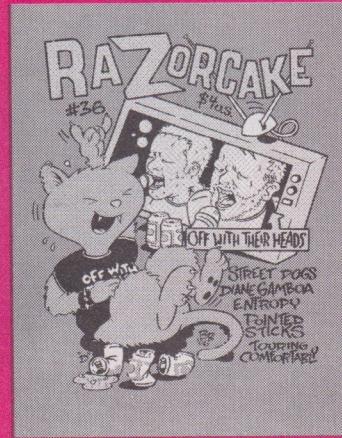
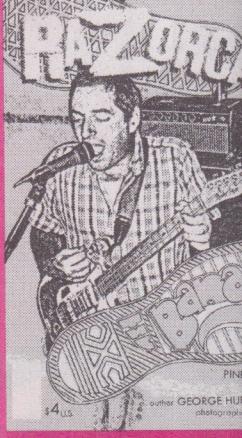
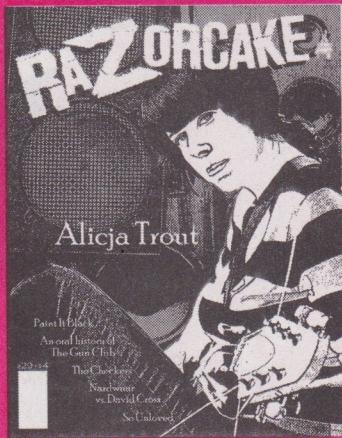


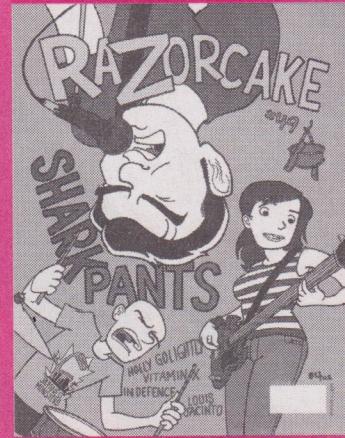
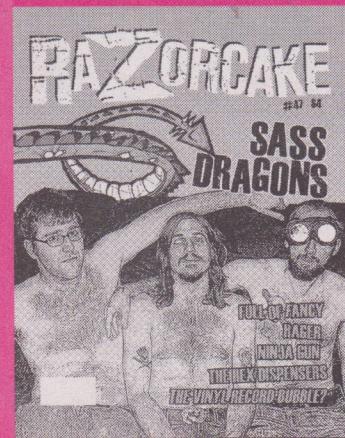
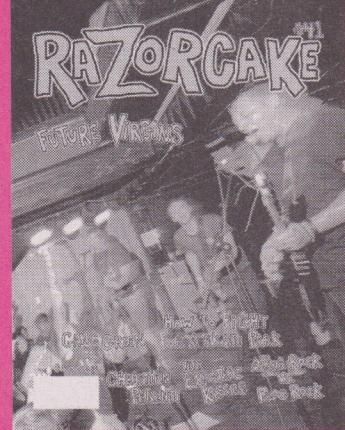
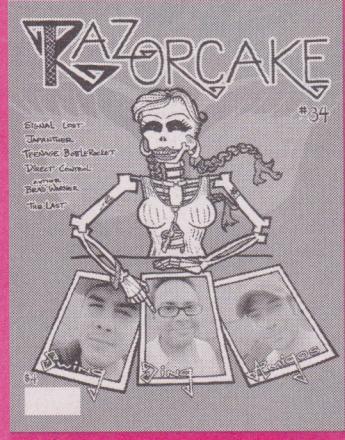
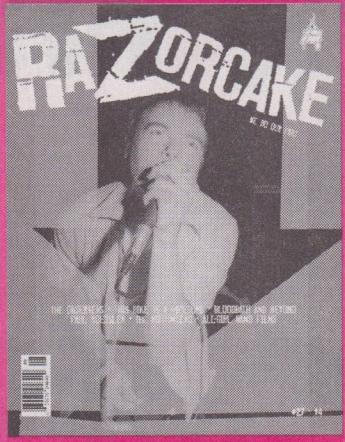
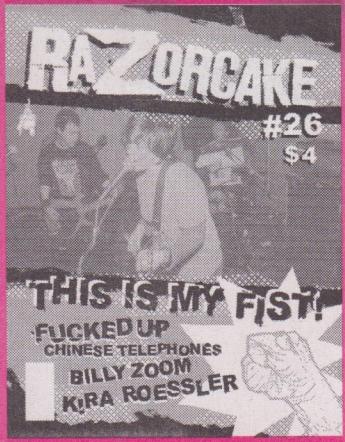
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